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NOVEMBER 1989 VOL. LXXIII No. 4 ISSN 0013-7073

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© 1989 by Encounter Ltd. *Ten issues a year (July-August and September-October are single issues). Per copy: UK £2.00: USA $4.50: Canada $5.00. Back numbers £3.00 ($6.00). Postage/packaging: 75p ($2.00). Annual subscription rates: see page 79. Address for all departments: Encounter Ltd., 44 Great Windmill Street, London W1V 7PA (01-434 3063): UK Trade Distributors: Cutlerglen, 13 Newington Industrial Estate, Crampton Street, London SE17 3AZ (01-708 1308). Second-class postage paid at Rahway, NJ. US Postmaster: send address corrections to Encounter, c/o Mercury Airfreight International Ltd Inc., 2323 Randolph Avenue, Avenel, NJ 07001*

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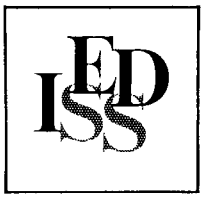

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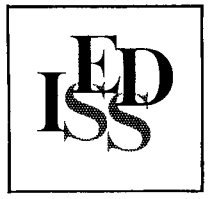

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**Colonel Eugueni Smirnov, former deputy air attache at the Soviet Embassy in London was so keen that he called personally to collect our publications. Sadly, he will have to wait a little longer to read them. He was one of 11 spies sent home by the British Government in May 1989.*

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Maurice Cowling

The Sources of the New Right

Irony, Geniality & Malice

MY BOOK *Mill and Liberalism*—which I had written a year earlier about John Stuart Mill as a political and religious philosopher—was published in November 1963. So far, however, from being merely about Mill, it was also about a phase in the development of the English public mind—that consensual phase in which the socialism, liberal collectivism and international anti-totalitarianism which had been established by the Churchill-coalition government of 1940 had provided the over-arching norm of English public thought for nearly 25 years.

By November 1963, the Wilson Prime-Ministership had not begun and had not yet created the deep moral depression it was to create on the Liberal Left. The ghosts of Tawney, Beveridge and Keynes were still at large, and there were few signs of the Student Revolution and the reign of priggishness, puritanism and permissiveness which were to accompany it. Though Raymond Williams was about to become a guru, it was by no means obvious that Hobsbawm, Perry Anderson, T. Eagleton and E. P. Thompson would become gurus too. The opinions which had become average as the Student Revolution of the 1930s had become the middle-aged Keynesianism of the 1950s still seemed to be delivering the goods and seemed likely to go on doing so, morally, politically and intellectually, into the far-distant future. No one yet understood that anti-totalitarianism, the memory of World War II and "the end of ideology" were propping them up, or that a new Student Revolution and resuscitation after the "death" of political theory might end by subverting them.

That in effect is what has happened. Professor Bernard Williams has made gestures of defence and has been assisted in his gesturings by Professor John Dunn's negativity, by Professor Quentin Skinner's civic triflings, and by the broader liberalism of Mr W. G. Runciman. But the orthodoxy has been eroded by political and economic events and by intellectual transactions not only on the Right, among converted Socialists, and on the Marxist Left, but also, via Hayek, John Gray and others, from within Liberalism itself. It is undoubtedly the case that collectivism and the higher Liberalism smelt a very great deal fresher 25 years ago than they do now.

Collectivism is one thing, the higher Liberalism is another. While *implying* an attitude towards the former, *Mill and Liberalism* was primarily about the latter.

For *Mill and Liberalism* the real world was not a liberal world, as the Marxists of the late 1960s were also to point out. It treated Liberalism as an élitist delusion and implied that it was Christianity which should underpin national solidarity. The Christianity it envisaged was Anglican and lacked the liberal appendages with which almost all types of Christianity have come to be lumbered since Pope John XXIII. Even so, the idea of a Christian society was as eccentric as the ideas it was attacking since, by 1963, perhaps even by 1903, a populist Anglican Christianity had become a chimaera.

About religion, *Mill and Liberalism* was nostalgic. Intellectually it was aggressive. It argued that Mill had not only been advocating a post-Christian religion, which he had pretended duplicitously not to be advocating, but had also suffused his advocacy with the same sort of liberal intolerance with which the higher Liberals and liberal collectivists in all political parties and all parts of the intellectual spectrum in the 1950s had been suffusing theirs.

Liberal intolerance and self-contradiction were the targets—or rather the inability of the liberal mind to understand that relativism and the sociology of knowledge could be turned against it, that the last king did not *have* to be

MAURICE COWLING *was at Battersea Grammar School and Jesus College, Cambridge, of which he was a Fellow from 1950-53 and 1961-63. After short periods in the Foreign Office and on the editorial staffs of "The Times" and the "Daily Express", he returned to Cambridge where since 1963 he has been a Fellow of Peterhouse. He contested the constituency of Bassetlaw as a Conservative candidate in the 1959 general election, was a member of Cambridgeshire County Council from 1966-70, and in 1970-71 was Literary Editor of "The Spectator". Mr Cowling—who is currently Olin Visiting Professor of Religion at Columbia University—is the author of books on political thought, political history, and the history of religion. At present he is working on the third volume of his "Religion and Public Doctrine in Modern England", to be published by Cambridge University Press who in November bring out the reprint of his "Mill and Liberalism" (1963), to which this essay forms a part of the new introduction.*

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strangled with the entrails of the last priest, and that, since arbitrariness was a characteristic of *all* assumptions, liberal assumptions (in the absence of the numinousness which they had sometimes had in the past but no longer had now) had none of the authority which was claimed for them.

When *Mill and Liberalism* was reviewed, several reviewers identified themselves as archetypes of its targets, one of them describing it, obligingly, as "dangerous and unpleasant".[1] Since then the already massive literature about Mill has proliferated, some of it in ways which are consonant with *Mill and Liberalism,* more of it in ways which are not. One feature of most of it has been that it deals with bits and pieces of Mill, or problems in Mill, and does not achieve an overall interpretation of Mill. *Mill and Liberalism* achieved such an interpretation by contextualising Mill, by understanding him as a cultural élitist, and by drawing out the anti-Christian implications of the sociological philosophy which he wished to inject into aristocratic mindlessness, commercial philistinism, and the as yet unrealised intellectuality of the poor.

If *Mill and Liberalism* were being written now, it would be more circuitous about Mill's view of the clerisy and more comprehensive about his philosophy. On the whole, however, it would reaffirm its account of Mill's hostility to Christianity and ignorance of Christianity's vitality, and would enlarge on the intimacy of the connection he assumed between the libertarian principle and the obsolescence of Christianity. Above all, it would state, more emphatically but more subtly than in 1963, that the object in writing was to show how rancid and solemn secular intelligentsias can become, and how particularly rancid and solemn they become on taking up the self-imposed task of reconstructing the thought-world which Erasmus and Luther, Descartes and Newton, Voltaire and Rousseau, according to historical preference, are supposed to have destroyed.

In all this there was an academic purpose, which was achieved by transposing on to an academic plane the arguments of a pamphlet I had written six years earlier in criticism of the outrage that had been provoked in liberal minds in all political parties and all areas of British life by Eden's attempt in the course of his short Prime Ministership to use military force to reoccupy the Suez Canal and bring down the Nasser government in October 1956.

This—unpublished—pamphlet[2] reflected the intensity of anger which was felt by both the critics and the supporters of Eden during the Suez crisis. It was not a defence of Eden; far less was it a defence of his cooperation with Israel. It was suspicious of Israel, mindful of the success of Israeli propaganda in London at that time, and mistrustful of Eden's opportunism. It assumed that Britain could probably not exercise paramountcy in the Middle East and would be unable to do so in the future if it failed to do so on this occasion, and it argued that the United Nations did not supply superior guarantees of world order, that it was wrong to assume that Britain should never use military force in defence of her own interests, and that an intelligentsia which could work up the moral indignation that the English intelligentsia had worked up about this question in late 1956 was so narrow and naive as to be intellectually offensive.

It is difficult to recreate the connections which turned a pamphlet about Suez into a book about Mill. But there *were* connections, and they issued in the belief (which was to be developed in *The Impact of Hitler* in 1975) that, from Britain's point of view, the 1939 war had been a liberal war which had destroyed the British Empire by being embarked on in a condition of moral indignation without the resources to fight it, that it had been providential good fortune which had placed the burden of fighting on the Russians and the Americans, and that the complacency which the Battle of Britain and Germany's unconditional surrender had inserted into the British mind demanded special resources of illusionlessness and hardmindedness, and an intellectual grasp of the insecurity of British prosperity and power, if British politics were to be conducted sensibly in the future.

Mill and Liberalism was followed by three large works of political history[3] which made a class-conflict analysis of the role of Parliament and a cynical assessment of the "principles" of the English parliamentary politician. They also asserted that public speech in a democracy is functional, that democratic speech conceals both its hand and its mind, and that democratic politicians have both conventions and an "autonomy" which require for their appreciation a comprehension as critical as the comprehension required for the appreciation of poetry.

These procedures of sceptical diagnosis were taken to suggest the existence of a "Peterhouse School of History".[4]

---

[1] See Dr Roland Hall in *Philosophical Quarterly,* January 1965. Lord Annan, Professor Maurice Cranston, Professor Alan Ryan, Professor Richard Wollheim and the young Dr Stephen Lukes identified themselves in *The Observer*, *The Listener*, *New Statesman and Nation* and *New Society*.

[2] The pamphlet, invited by the then chairman of the Conservative Political Centre, was written in a partisan tone, and was obviously unpublishable at a time in early 1957 when the prevailing desire of the Conservative Party was to get as far away from Suez as possible.

[3] *Disraeli, Gladstone and Revolution* (1967), *The Impact of Labour 1920-24* (1971), *The Impact of Hitler 1933-40* (1975).

[4] Others who have been supposed to belong to a "Peterhouse School of History" include Professor John Vincent of the University of Bristol; Dr A. B. Cooke (the present Director of the Conservative Political Centre), late of Queen's University, Belfast; Dr Andrew Jones (the distinguished bookseller), late of the University of Reading; Dr Jonathan Clark of All Souls College, Oxford; Dr Jonathan Parry of King's College, London; Dr Philip Williamson of the University of Durham; Dr Richard Brent, late of St John's College, Cambridge; and Dr Michael Bentley of the University of Sheffield. All of these, apart from Dr Bentley, were either undergraduates at or Fellows of Peterhouse, Cambridge. They have written, among other works: *The Formation of the Liberal Party* and *Disraeli* (Vincent); *The Governing Passion* (Vincent and Cooke); *The Politics of Reform* (Jones); *Politics Without Democracy: The Liberal Mind 1914-29* and *The Climax of Liberal Policy* (Bentley); *The Dynamics of Change: English Society 1660-1832* and *Revolution and Rebellion* (Clark); *Democracy and Religion* (Parry); *Liberal Anglican Politics* (Brent); *National Crisis and National Government 1927-1932* (forthcoming, or so it seems, from Williamson); *Disraeli, Gladstone and Revolution, The Impact of Labour, The Impact of Hitler* and *Religion and Public Doctrine in Modern England* (Cowling). John Maloney (*Marshall, Orthodoxy and the Professionalisation of Economics*, 1985) and Ian Harris (*John Locke: The Moral Theology*, forthcoming, 1990) also admit to a Peterhouse connection.

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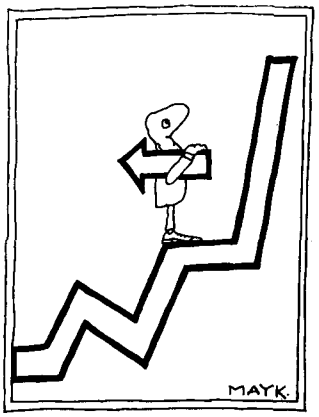
An essay contributed to a Powellite volume of 1970,[5] a year as literary editor of Mr George Gale's *Spectator,* and a volume of *Conservative Essays*[6] which fired ill-sighted shots across the bows of the *economic* "New Right", then suggested the existence of a "Peterhouse New Right" about which, though there have been a number of accounts, there has been much misunderstanding.

During the past 25 years there have been many shifts of mentality which, if given more central political expression, might have constituted the basis for a "New Right". Professor W. H. Greenleaf's Oakeshottian anti-collectivism and the anti-collectivism of *The Economic History Review* under Dr Max Hartwell and Professor C. H. Wilson are examples. So are the Larkinian pessimism which transported Mr Kingsley Amis from the Fabian Society to the Black Papers, the adaptations of F. R. Leavis made by Mr Ian Robinson and the magazine *The Human World*, and the aesthetic leap which has enabled Mr Peter Fuller to move from the Marxist Modernism of his first ten books to become the founder of *Modern Painters* and Art Critic of *The Sunday Telegraph.* Among the Roman Catholic and Anglican laity there has been resistance to the liberalism and collectivism of the higher clergy; among Anglican ordinands and the Anglican well-to-do, there has been an Evangelical, Sabbatarian and biblical-Calvinist revival which has been both politically Conservative and more theocratic than Mrs Mary Whitehouse, from an older generation of Evangelicals, had ever wished to be. *Private Eye* and Mr Alan Watkins of *The Observer* (until recently), though differing from one another and not in either case being Conservative, have had conservative resonances, while the sociological relativism which has underpinned the successive versions of the New Left could equally well have underpinned a Tory Marxism dedicated to the cynical truth (which English Marxists are too liberal to understand) that the inequalities, sufferings and alienations consequent upon ideological hegemony are vital concomitants of the freedom, discipline and social solidarity of modern societies.

THERE HAVE BEEN by-blows. Essentially, the New Right in these years has had five faces, all of which have manifested passion and conviction, even where there has also been mistrust of passion and conviction, and all of which have set themselves to wrench the public mind out of the groove it had been running in since 1940. These are: the movement of economic opinion against Keynesianism, corporatism and collectivism, and in favour of capitalism, monetarism and the free market; the educational movement which derives from the Black Papers; the parliamentary, party and public movements known as Powellism and Thatcherism; the movement of academic opinion which is known severally as the Peterhouse Right, the London School of Economics Right, and Professor Scruton's Right; and a movement among Conservative journalists associated primarily with *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Sunday Telegraph.*

The Economists



THE ECONOMIC MOVEMENT was an extension of judgments made by historians like T. S. Ashton that the Industrial Revolution, so far from destroying the living standards of the poor, had rescued the English poor from the poverty which they had suffered in Ireland and India. It was also the extension of judgments made by economists like Jewkes, Schwartz, Bauer, Hayek, von Mises, Robbins, and Sir Dennis Robertson, who believed that Keynes did not deserve to displace Adam Smith, that the collectivist orthodoxy was mistaken, and that the Treasury, all the political parties, and most Economics faculties in British universities were in supine subservience to it. These were the judgments which had been given wide circulation by Hayek's book *The Road to Serfdom* in 1944, and received a propaganda-edge when Mr Anthony Fisher incorporated and Lord Harris set up the Institute of Economic Affairs between 1955 and 1957.

The IEA was a non-party body; it included among its members economists with varied political involvements, including Liberals like Sir Oscar Hobson and ex-socialists like Graham Hutton and Colin Clark. Mr Arthur Seldon belonged to the Liberal Party and Lord Harris to the Conservative Party; Mr John Wood, who eventually became the third full-time member, did not belong to any party. Wood had been educated at a public school, Harris and Seldon at London grammar schools. All three had read Economics—Seldon at the London School of Economics in the 1930s when Hayek was a Professor, Wood in Cambridge in the late 1940s under S. R. Dennison, for whom he had worked in the Cabinet Office after reading Politics, Philosophy and Economics at Oxford, Harris in Cambridge at the same time under Hagenbuch and Dennison.

After Cambridge Harris was a lecturer in Political Economy at St Andrews, a Conservative parliamentary candidate in Scotland, and a biographer of Lord Butler at a time when Lord Butler could easily be represented—in the way in which his supporters were to represent him by contrast with Lord Home seven years later—as a thinking Conservative and the natural Conservative leader. One wonders whether Lord Harris was as much turned off when the author of *The Middle Way* became Prime Minister in

[5] Maurice Cowling, "The Present Situation", in *Powell and the 1970 Election* (1970), edited by Mr John Wood of the Institute of Economic Affairs; the volume also included contributions from Mr George Gale and Mrs Diana Spearman.

[6] *Conservative Essays,* ed. Maurice Cowling (1978). It included contributions from Mrs Shirley Letwin, the late Mr T. E. Utley, Dr Edward Norman, Professor Kenneth Minogue, Mr George Gale, Mr Peregrine Worsthorne, Dr Michael Bentley, Dr Andrew Jones, Professor Roger Scruton, Dr John Casey, Mr John Biffen, MP, Professor Richard Griffiths and Lord Peyton.

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January 1957 as he was to be turned on when Lord Thorneycroft, Lord Rhyl (Mr Nigel Birch) and Mr Enoch Powell—the Macmillan Treasury team—resigned from the Macmillan government a year later.

The IEA's aim was to have an impact on Westminster and Whitehall. But in its early years it did not see its way. It published books and pamphlets which subjected the consensus to critical examination, first by economists, later by non-economists as well.[7] It developed connections with Messrs Grimond, Woodrow Wyatt and Desmond Donnelly (these last two when they were Labour MPs), persuaded Mr Powell, Lord Thorneycroft, Lord Shawcross and Sir Alan Herbert to write for it, and was approached spontaneously both by Sir Geoffrey Howe, when chairman of the Bow Group, and by Lord Joseph after the general election of 1964. In its early years, however, its managers despaired of politicians' indifference to economic argument, mistrusted the Conservative Party's subservience to farmers' interests and the Labour Party's subservience to Trade Union interests, and doubted for a very long time whether two London grammar-school boys and one public-school boy would be able to convert the massed ranks of an Establishment consensus.

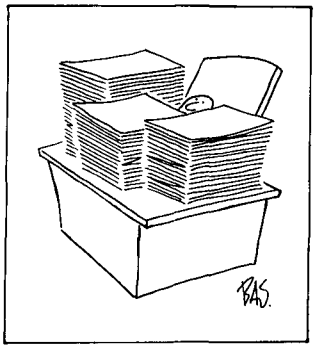
In the 1960s the IEA was radical in the way in which *Mill and Liberalism* was radical: it wanted to blow up the consensus, though the consensus it wanted to blow up was the collectivist consensus about economic policy rather than the liberal-internationalist consensus about Suez. Having set out (in Harris's case, at least) with Lord Robbins as its mentor and Keynes, Beveridge and J. K. Galbraith as its targets, it found in Hayek's book *The Constitution of Liberty* (which left me cold when it was published in 1960) a constructive statement which transcended the negative statement that Hayek had made in *The Road to Serfdom* sixteen years earlier.

At first the IEA emphasised not so much liberty and economic growth as economic truth—or rather the macro-economic distortions on which Keynesianism was founded. A micro-economic analysis then became the guarantor of entrepreneurial growth, consumer liberty and reduced taxation, and was accompanied by assaults on the special interests which were being encouraged to carry begging bowls around government departments, on the statistics with which government departments were anaesthetising the public, and on the claim that a mixed economy was better able than a capitalist economy to maintain economic prosperity.

During the Macmillan years the IEA was marginal. Though conscious of a change in the Conservative Party after the general election of 1964, it felt little confidence in Mr Heath's economic conversion, was depressed by his policies after 1972, and did not begin to feel central until Lord Joseph's second conversion in 1974 and the International Monetary Fund's judgment on the economic events of the 1970s seemed to prove that what it had been saying was true.

Since the mid-1970s the IEA has been an impressive publishing undertaking, has felt itself closer than in the 1950s to professional economic opinion (in the Virginian version especially), and has seen many aspects of its thought (and some of its policies) made part of Conservative and governmental thought and policy. Though it has failed—if it tried—to convert the Labour Party, the identity between its language and intentions and the language and intentions of Mrs Thatcher's government has become very close.

The Black Papers



Parallel to the IEA, but more amateur and a decade later in origin, have been the Black Papers. These were published first during the Student Revolution of 1968 by Dr A. E. Dyson and Professor C. B. Cox who, with the further assistance of Sir Rhodes Boyson in the 1970s, attracted a rag-bag of trans-Party contributors including Mr John Sparrow (the Warden of All Souls College, Oxford), Professor H. J. Eysenck, Miss Iris Murdoch, Mr Kingsley Amis, Mr John Gross, Dr Robert Conquest, the late Dr Imre Lakatos, the Reverend Dr Edward Norman, Dr Bryan Wilson and Lord Beloff.

Dyson and Cox belonged to the English Faculty at Manchester University and had been editing *The Critical Quarterly* for a decade when the Student Revolution began. They believed that the ultimate effect of the revolution would be to reduce academic independence and the state funding of universities. They were led on by the success of a Black Paper about University Education into Black Papers about School Education which claimed that numeracy and literacy were being neglected and that comprehensivisation, as it was actually being carried out, would reduce standards and deprive able working-class children of access to the universities.

Dyson and Cox were Labour voters who had been brought up on Leavis in Cambridge but had broken the mould and been much influenced by Jacques Barzun and Hannah Arendt. Sir Rhodes Boyson, before he became an MP and a Conservative Minister, had written economic history, had been headmaster of a comprehensive school in London, and had learned to speak the language of Tory populism. Between them, these three identified a crisis and the need to replace the delinquency and liberation which they associated with progressive education by discipline, northern earnest-

[7] The economists included Messrs Hutt, Morgan, Shenfield, Yamey, Prest, Paish, Bareau, Stigler, Johnson, Walters, Peacock, Friedman, Hayek and J. M. Buchanan (before he became famous), to whom Messrs Preston, Minford, Brittan, Brian Griffiths and Rees-Mogg were to be added later. (The weight and intelligence of IEA pamphlets in the middle and later 1970s are very striking.) The non-economists have included, over the years, Professor Julius Gould, Dr Hartwell, Mr Ronald Butt, Mr Colin Welch, Mr Andrew Alexander, and Professor Norman Gash (the distinguished historian and biographer of Peel).

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ness, and parental and institutional authority. While having virtually no organisation and making no impact on government policy, they attracted a good deal of attention from schoolteachers and the media, and had a considerable impact on public debate, especially during Mr James Callaghan's Prime Ministership.

Powellism & Thatcherism

THE BLACK-PAPER MOVEMENT, though not important in itself, was a symptom of distaste for "progressive" education. It showed that there was a reactionary public waiting to be tapped, as it had been waiting since the Smethwick by-election of 1964, that the instinct which had led Mr Powell to try to tap it was a sure one, and that the contradictions which were to be exemplified later by Mr Ray Honeyford from a tolerable, and Mr Salman Rushdie from an odious, standpoint were implicit in the Indian, Pakistani and West Indian immigrations, the size of which Mr Powell had denounced the Home Office for wilfully underestimating from 1968 onwards.

Powellism was Mr Powell's attempt to establish himself as Conservative leader, to revivify Conservative policy, and to put the Conservative Party in tune with popular opinion after the Conservative defeat at the general election of 1966. This was attractive to some economists but objectionable to others because it associated the new economic norms, which Mr Heath was also adopting, with Mr Powell's illiberal Nietzscheanism. Though unsuccessful in promoting Mr Powell, it induced public intolerance of the consensus he was attacking and the first widespread feeling that liberal rhetoric—and particularly Mr Heath's liberal rhetoric—was intolerable.

Mr Powell's appeal, though idiosyncratic, was broad-based. It was attractive intellectually by reason of the impression Mr Powell left of having democratic, perhaps even nihilistic, instincts, of being clever enough and nasty enough to stand out against consensual wisdom, and, like Mrs Thatcher later, of not being part of a bureaucratic Establishment.

In becoming a public idol, Mr Powell came to be in permanent rebellion against Mr Heath. He joined other Conservative MPs in voting with the Labour Party about issues like the Prices and Incomes Policy, developed an unexpected solidarity with the Ulster Unionist Party after the suppression of the Stormont Parliament in 1972, and via Mr Andrew Alexander (then of the *Yorkshire Post*) cooperated silently with the Labour Party about the European Economic Community at the first general election of 1974.

Despite having a small parliamentary following independently of issues, Mr Powell did not develop a Party within the Party and, instead of fighting the 1974 election at the head of a Conservative group committed to vote together on European issues afterwards, resigned from the Party and urged Conservatives to vote Labour. In this phase of activity, apart from Mr John Biffen and others in the House of Commons, Mr Powell attracted the sympathy of an embryonic intelligentsia outside, including Mr John Wood and Mr Andrew Alexander, along, in their congruent but personally more distant ways, with Messrs George Gale, Anthony Lejeune, Ronald Butt, Patrick Cosgrave, Colin Welch and T. E. Utley.

Mr Powell failed, but made a considerable impact in the course of failing. It is doubtful whether "Thatcherism" could have been so successful without him.

AS A CONCEPT, "Thatcherism" was almost certainly invented by critics on the Left and implies a continuity of intention which historical investigation may be inclined to question. It is certain, however, that the Centre for Policy Studies was invented by Lord Joseph (and Mrs Thatcher) as a makeweight to the Conservative Research Department after Mr Heath's first general election defeat in 1974, that its public purpose was to proclaim Capitalism's superiority to Socialism, and that the original intention was to start with a "great debate" in the Albert Hall between Lord Joseph and Mr Michael Foot. An Eysenckian, or Eugenic, speech drafted for him in part by Sir Alfred Sherman having compelled Lord Joseph to retire from the contest for the Conservative leadership, Mrs Thatcher then led the attack on Mr Heath—benefitting not only from the fact that she was not Mr Heath (who was by now widely disliked in the Conservative Party) but also from her willingness to suggest regret for the traumas and tergiversations through which Conservatives had been made, humourlessly, to pass in the later years of Mr Heath's government, of which, of course, she had been a member.

During the Conservative Party's period in opposition between 1975 and 1979, the Centre for Policy Studies, under Mr Gerald Frost and Sir Alfred Sherman, took over some of the Institute of Economic Affairs's authors and much of what they had established, and supplemented the economic justification they had been offering of the new economic norms with an attempt to provide a "moral" justification as well. The outcome was the establishment of a low-keyed power-house, in which Mrs Thatcher (and Lord Joseph) rehearsed the arguments they were to act on in office, and a publishing imprint was supplied for pamphlets by Mr Tim Congdon, Mr Russell Lewis, Mr Samuel Brittan, Mr Kingsley Amis, Lord Bauer, Lord Thomas, Lord Bruce-Gardyne and Lord Joseph, as well as for collections of speeches by Mr Biffen and Mrs Thatcher.

UNTIL enough of the archives are open, including the private archives of politicians, it will be difficult to know how Mrs Thatcher succeeded after 1979 in effecting changes which Mr Heath had promised in 1966 but had failed to deliver in office. It may well turn out that the existence of an independent intelligentsia was unimportant, and that

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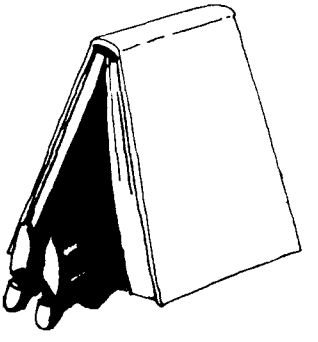
what mattered was the opinions of civil servants and of the political heavyweights—Mr Nigel Lawson, Sir Geoffrey Howe, Lord Joseph and, pre-eminently, Mrs Thatcher herself—after the acquiescence of the last three under Mr Heath.[8]

In the early stages of her Prime Ministership Mrs Thatcher's achievements were negligible, her relations with her Cabinets peculiar, and her leadership, at least until the Falklands war, highly provisional. Historians will make their usual enquiries about the Civil Service, the Cabinet and the Conservative Party both then and since, and about any friends whom Mrs Thatcher may have been in the habit of consulting. They will also want to know whether the Institute of Economic Affairs and the Centre for Policy Studies (through access to Mrs Thatcher and Lord Joseph), the Prime Minister's Policy Unit (under Sir John Hoskyns, Mr Ferdinand Mount, Mr John Redwood, and Professor Brian Griffiths), and the Conservative Research Department (once restored to doctrinal respectability by Mr Robin Harris) have supplied advice and advisers, including economic advisers, that might not have arrived by other routes; and whether, or to what extent, Mrs Thatcher's publicity advisers have established a creative connection between publicity and policy.

POWELLISM ANTICIPATED, Thatcherism coincided with, changes in economic opinion which occurred very generally among economists, civil servants and financial commentators of all political opinions in face of the economic decline of the 1970s. They were also part of a struggle for power, victory in which enabled Mrs Thatcher to play radical variations on that patriotic conjunction of freedom, authority, inequality, individualism, and average decency and respectability which had been the Conservative Party's theme since at least 1886 and the aspiration it had maintained through all the resistances it had encountered from, and all the concessions it had made to, the higher thought, collectivist practice, and the caution (or reluctance) of its leaders.

The Conservative Party under Mrs Thatcher has used a radical rhetoric to give intellectual respectability to what the Conservative Party has always wanted, and in the absence of the Labour Party has created a cadre, like the cadres of Pitt and Peel, to which, once created, not only civil servants, politicians, entrepreneurs and conventional millionaires but also dons and journalists—from Lord Blake, Sir David English and Mr Andrew Neil at one end to Lord Dacre, Sir John Plumb and Mr Kelvin Mackenzie at the other end—have found it natural or prudent to give support,[9] even when they have not shared the austere conviction of Mr Congdon, the cheerful conviction of Mr Oliver Knox, the buccaneering conviction of Professor Norman Stone, or the rational conviction of Mr Redwood, Mr Willetts, Miss Lawlor, and Mr Oliver Letwin.

The Academics



IN ALL THIS, Mrs Thatcher's government and the Conservative Party have not had much to do with the London School of Economics Right and have had virtually nothing to do with either the Peterhouse Right or Professor Scruton's Right.[10]

Professor Scruton's Right consists of the authors of *The Salisbury Review* under his editorship,[11] and is the nearest intellectually reputable thing that England has had to the authoritarian Conservatism which de Maistre, in a Christian, and Maurras in a post-Christian, mode had propagated in France. It was for a time crudely anti-Marxist, is insensitive to the refractoriness of political circumstances, and has attracted special attention from the Left—not only because of the unintentional caricature it sometimes provides of the ways in which Conservatives think but also because of the exaggerated importance which the Left attaches to intelligentsia politics.

Professor Scruton is a serious thinker who has arranged a

[8] Mr Lawson, as editor of *The Spectator* between 1966 and 1970, had been one of the earliest critics of the prevailing economic orthodoxy, as had Sir Geoffrey Howe.

[9] Sir John Plumb claims (*The Making of an Historian,* 1988, pp.156-57) that in *Crisis in the Humanities* in 1964 he spoke "for some elements in the suburban Conservatism which was to carry, decades later, Mrs Thatcher to power". *Crisis in the Humanities* did not seem to be doing this at the time; on the contrary, it seemed to be a pseudo-book about a pseudo-problem, and to reflect the prudently trendy image which Sir John had seemed to be developing in the age of Mr Harold Wilson before the rolling of the Thatcher bandwagon had suggested the desirability of a prudent conversion. For a considered view of Sir John's thought, see Maurice Cowling, *Religion and Public Doctrine in Modern England* (1980), vol. I, pp. 376-79.

[10] Neither has it had anything to do with the Conservative Philosophy Group, founded a decade ago by Dr John Casey, Professor Scruton, Sir Hugh Fraser, MP, and Mr Jonathan Aitken, MP. In spite of publicity to the contrary, this is an exclusively *discussion* group for dons, journalists and MPs at which Mrs Thatcher has put in occasional appearances but which has no policies of its own and has never made any attempt to have policies.

[11] Including especially Messrs Ian Crowther, R. A. D. Grant, David Levy, and Anthony O'Hear. *The Salisbury Review* has owed much to Dr Casey's period as editor of the *Cambridge Review* between 1975 and 1979 when, in association among others with Dr David Watkin and Mr Oliver Letwin, he laid down some of the lines which *The Salisbury Review* was to follow. *The Salisbury Review* began publication in 1982 as the organ of the Salisbury Group which had been founded by Mrs Diana Spearman and the present Marquess of Salisbury in 1978, and had had its name chosen for it by Professor Michael Oakeshott in commemoration of the third Marquess of Salisbury, the Victorian Conservative Prime Minister (for whom see *Religion and Public Doctrine*, vol. I, pp.361-87). The Salisbury Group has had on its Executive Committee at various times Mr Utley, Professor Richard Griffiths, Professor Scruton, Professor Kedourie, Sir Charles Pickthorn, myself, and Mr Richard Sykes (the libel solicitor of the *Daily* and *Sunday Telegraphs*). Like the Conservative Philosophy Group, it is primarily a discussion group, has no policies of its own, and has had no discernible effect on party or governmental policy or thinking.

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shotgun marriage between Hegel, Kant, Oakeshott, Leavis, Eliot, Wittgenstein, Powell, Anglo-Saxon philosophy and the English Common Law. He has produced a versatile and impressive *oeuvre* which, in addition to dealing with law and politics, deals with aesthetics, literature, philosophy and sexuality (in a sometimes off-beam way), gives unambiguous allegiance to art and culture as modern substitutes for religion, and leaves the impression of believing in "Conservatism" either as an aborted mixture of Christianity and secular truth, or as simply secular truth in itself. For a number of years when young he was a pupil and collaborator of Dr John Casey, from whom he acquired intellectual range and seriousness, a faint excess of high-principled intensity, and a coat-trailing, or Irish, contentiousness about race and colour which he has more or less abandoned since. Also when young, he was a Fellow of Peterhouse from which he acquired some of the attitudes of "the Peterhouse Right".

"THE PETERHOUSE RIGHT" is the name given by their critics to a small group of dons whose teaching and writing is about the history of politics, art, thought and religion and who share a common connection with Peterhouse—the oldest and in the 20th century one of the more admirable colleges in the University of Cambridge. Though their cohesiveness should not be exaggerated and some of them are no longer at Peterhouse, its members share common prejudices—against the higher liberalism and all sorts of liberal rhetoric, including ecclesiastical liberal rhetoric, and in favour of irony, geniality and malice as solvents of enthusiasm, virtue, and political elevation.

The Peterhouse Right wishes élites and establishments to eschew guilt and self-doubt, to perform the duties of their stations, and to avoid unrealistic claims about their rectitude. They tend to assume, ignorantly and flippantly, what Professor John Vincent has stated in criticism of the Institute of Economic Affairs—that "night-school economics", though preferable to Keynesian economics, is politically boring. More positively, they state that government and politics have dignities, languages and reasons of their own, that these require illusionless refurbishing in every generation, and that they should not be subordinated to even the most compatible of economic doctrines. Dr Watkin, Professor Vincent, myself, Dr Norman, and Dr Jonathan Clark believe in "Conservatism" as secular truth as little as they believe in "Liberalism" or "Socialism" as secular truth, and they accompany distaste for "secular truth" with the belief, whether issuing in religious observance or not, that "secular truth" tends to be solemn and that secular truths tend to the dissolution of Christianity.

THE PETERHOUSE RIGHT is an academic Right—a set of monastic, or country, cousins who have some journalistic connections and weak political connections. Its chief political success has been the election of Lord Dacre (the historian, Hugh Trevor-Roper) to the Mastership of Peterhouse,[12] not so much on the ground that he was the best candidate—such a consideration seldom operating in elections of this sort—as on the ironical, genial or malicious grounds that, in the circumstances in which he was being elected, he was the candidate most likely to serve everyone right, including (as they knew at the time, and as it turned out) themselves.

The Peterhouse Right includes only a small number of the Fellows of Peterhouse, among whom there is much solid worth, a variety of opinions, religious and otherwise, and a certain amount of scientific distinction; but a number of the journalists and publicists of the New Right have been undergraduates, graduates or fellows of the College,[13] and Mrs Shirley Letwin was an unbeneficed teacher there for a number of years after her resignation from the London School of Economics in the 1970s.

Between the Peterhouse Right and the London School of Economics Right there are affinities, Dr John Charvet, Dr Alan Beattie, and Professor William Letwin and Mrs Shirley Letwin of the LSE being enemies of both collectivism and liberal certainty, Professor Kenneth Minogue having an Oakeshottian hatred of "ideological shibboleths" and "the liberal mind", and Professor Elie Kedourie, with whom the

[12] Lord Dacre has written an article ("The Cambridge Connection", in the *Sunday Telegraph* of 26 March 1989) which describes the "neo-Toryism of the 1980s" as being not only "Cambridge-fed" but also a "grim and doctrinaire" continuation of the "Cambridge puritanism" of the 17th century. Lord Dacre obviously dislikes both "the Peterhouse Right" and the "neo-Toryism of the 1980s". In truth, with one possible exception, no member of either could reasonably be thought of as "puritan". In both there is a strong streak of sceptical satire, both about Lord Dacre himself and about the egalitarianism of his Oxford friends, Sir Isaiah Berlin, Sir Stuart Hampshire and the late Sir Alfred Ayer. The idea of the neo-Toryism of the 1980s being "puritan" rises into farce when applied to Professor Norman Stone who, until he became Professor of Modern History at Oxford, had spent his adult life in Cambridge, and though not part of the "Peterhouse" New Right, was certainly a "Cambridge neo-Tory of the 1980s". In teaching his tale of the Peterhouse Right, Lord Dacre has become an Ancient Mariner, though clubmen in London, colleagues in the House of Lords, journalists on the Isle of Dogs, hosts in American universities and innocent Fellows of Oxford and Cambridge Colleges must find it difficult to understand the compulsion to slay the birds that made his breeze to blow.

[13] In addition to Professor Scruton, Professor Vincent, Dr Watkin, Dr Norman, and Dr Jonathan Clark, who are now, or have in the past been fellows of Peterhouse, Mr Gale, Mr Fuller, Dr Cosgrave, Dr Andrew Jones, and Messrs Welch and Worsthorne (who came from Stowe School together and were later to be on the staff of *The Daily Telegraph* together) have all been either undergraduates or research students of the College. Dr Noel Malcolm, the present political correspondent of *The Spectator,* read History at Peterhouse and Dr Caroline Moore (the wife of Mr Charles Moore, the present editor of *The Spectator*) is Peterhouse's first woman Fellow. Dr Moore however is a literary critic or historian rather than a politician and Dr Malcolm, though endowed, like Mr Moore, with Conservative sympathies, holds them in the diffident and unenthusiastic way of an intelligent and unusually learned, but acreless, Etonian. In any case *The Spectator* maintains under Mr Moore, as it generally has under previous editors, except during Mr Gale's anti-European and virtually Powellite editorship in the early 1970s, a far blander position than a "New Right" label would suggest.

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anti-secular affinity is strongest, presenting the secular problem in a Muslim and Jewish as well as in a Christian framework. It is also the case, though it may not be important, that Mrs Letwin and Professor Minogue are directors of the Centre for Policy Studies.

The Journalists

PROFESSOR SCRUTON'S Right, the Peterhouse Right and the London School of Economics Right have all had some effect on the opinions which seep outwards from the universities. Dr Watkin was an early contributor to the by now established attack on architectural Modernism. Professor Scruton has a following in schools, polytechnics and universities, and among the Conservative clergy, and has become a beckoning beacon to Mr Peter Fuller on his way over from Marxist Modernism. Dr Norman was the first satirist of Synodical government in the Church of England and the first post-War writer effectively to suggest that the Bench of Bishops was both objectionably liberal in its theology and objectionably collectivist in its politics. These three, together with Mrs Letwin, Professors Kedourie, Minogue and Vincent, and now Dr Jonathan Clark, have all had periods as productive journalists or book-reviewers (including in Professor Vincent's case an eventful period as a columnist for *The Sun*). Where public opinion is concerned, nevertheless, it is the professional journalists who have been of first importance.

In this connection, "New Right" may be a misnomer, since some of the journalists concerned grew up in the shadow of Herbert Butterfield, D. W. Brogan, Michael Oakeshott and *The Cambridge Journal*,[14] and were surprised when the opinions they had picked up in the 1940s and 1950s were given a second wind in the 1970s and 1980s. Neither would a later generation have been given their heads if Mr Maurice Green, as editor of *The Daily Telegraph* from 1964 onwards and a long-standing believer in market economics, had not appointed as his deputy editor Mr Colin Welch, one of the most intelligent of Conservative journalists and also a long-standing believer in market economics; or if, after Mr Welch had brought Mr T. E. Utley on to the paper and they between them had brought on Messrs John O'Sullivan and Frank Johnson, Lord Deedes had suppressed them when he in his turn became editor in 1974.

For *The Daily Telegraph* to be a free-market newspaper was nothing new. What was new was that through Welch, Utley, O'Sullivan and Johnson, and through Mr Michael Wharton as "Peter Simple", an old dog bared new teeth at old enemies, and that Welch's Hayekianism, Utley's High Toryism, Johnson's and Wharton's satire, and O'Sullivan's political engagements were pointed at Mr Heath as Conservative leader (particularly after he had ceased to be Prime Minister) with greater subtlety, intelligence and information than even well-informed Conservative newspapers are normally able to point at Conservative leaders.

The transformation in the stature of *The Daily Telegraph*, though followed by the departure of Utley, Johnson and O'Sullivan to *The Times*, predated Lord Rees-Mogg's conversion while editor of *The Times*, the encouragement given by Mr Charles Douglas-Home to market economics, Cold Warriordom and the New Right after Mr Rupert Murdoch's purchase of *The Times* in the early 1980s, and the demonstrations given—continuously by the *Daily Express* and the *Sunday Express*, less continuously by *The Spectator*, *The Economist*, *the Financial Times, the Daily Mail* and *The Sunday Times* during the 1980s. Mr Peregrine Worsthorne has been chief political correspondent of *The Sunday Telegraph* since it was founded in 1961; one of the most confident and pleasing realisations of the journalistic New Right has been the upmarket demonstration he gave as editor of *The Sunday Telegraph* between 1986 and 1989, when political precision, Chestertonian paradox, and an Oakeshottian contempt for the liberal intelligentsia—along with regular contributions from Mr Auberon Waugh, Lord Harris, Lord Bruce-Gardyne, Mr Fuller, Dr Norman, Mr Powell, Mr Bruce Anderson, Mr Frank Johnson, Dr Casey, Professor Minford, Professor Scruton and Dr Jonathan Clark—created as admirable a conjunction of confirmation and critical invigilation as could be expected in a Conservative newspaper of Mrs Thatcher, the economic New Right and the aims and assumptions of suburban Conservatism.

THE CUMULATIVE EFFECT of the journalistic transformation has been considerable, however little the managers, and even the journalists, of the *Telegraphs* have believed that the opinions which they were promoting had any significant impact on their readers. It has eased Mrs Thatcher's way with Conservative electors and the Conservative Party, has persuaded the Conservative thinking classes that the weight of the argument is on their side, and has turned against the Left the assumption which the satire of the late 1960s had turned against the Right—that politics can properly be considered as farce, or, indeed, in *The Sun* as pornography.

The journalism of the New Right has registered, and helped to create, a significant change in public thought, though among the professional journalists only Utley, O'Sullivan, Anderson, Sherman, Bruce-Gardyne, Cosgrave and Mount[15] have had experience of government or the management of the Conservative Party. But really everyone agrees—apart possibly in their differing ways from Scruton, Casey and Sherman—that, though doctrine matters, the Conservative Party should not wish to be either doctrinaire or authoritarian.

[14] *The Cambridge Journal* was founded by one of the silent props of post-War English intellectual Conservatism, the late Professor Desmond Williams of University College, Dublin, while a research student at Peterhouse in 1948.

[15] If Mr Mount is to be regarded as a figure of The New Right and not as an older and subtly Oakeshottian version of Mr Charles Moore without Mr Moore's emphasis on Conservative Anglicanism.

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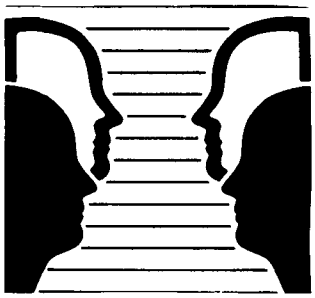

THE NEW RIGHT has been conducted by about 50 people (mainly graduates, and mostly men) who have come from no one type of social, sexual, or intellectual background and who include among their number a smattering of atheists and agnostics; a few converted, a few practising and a few lapsed Catholics; a handful of Jews, observing or otherwise; some Dissenters and Evangelicals; a fair number of observing and a number of converted Anglicans; and a contingent for whom religion is of little significance.

In opinion there has been a lack of stereotype. Many of those who have supported market economics have been authoritarian about moral and social questions, while many who supported Mr Powell economically did not support him about Europe, Ireland, Immigration or the Soviet Union. Cold Warriors and anti-Cold Warriors, pro-Europeans and anti-Europeans, pro-Americans and anti-Americans, and both the friends and the enemies of Israel have been distributed fairly randomly.

Some of the economists—Mr Samuel Brittan, for example—have come to be enthusiastic about Mrs Thatcher, among whose most enthusiastic supporters are ex-Socialists some of whom assume that society can be reformed by legislation. Sir John Junor, Mr Brian Walden and Mr Ronald Spark (the chief leader-writer of *The Sun*) are Thatcherites without being Conservatives, and there are signs, chiefly in *The Sun*, of a Thatcherite anti-Establishmentarianism which does not spare the monarchy. Messrs Alexander, Welch, Biffen, Cosgrave, Butt, Gale, O'Sullivan, Frank Johnson, and others who would find it embarrassing to be mentioned, were admirers of Mr Powell before they settled for Mrs Thatcher. Mr Utley, intellectually the most impregnable of Conservatives, while moving from being a Butlerian in the 1950s through being a Powellite in the 1960s to being a speechwriter for Mrs Thatcher in the 1980s, insisted (with reservations in the cases of both Mr Powell and Mrs Thatcher) that all three were exponents of an undoctrinaire traditional Conservatism with which the economic movement need not be in conflict, provided it was kept out of the hands of the bigots. Even Mr Worsthorne, whose emphasis has been on the duties of ruling classes during nearly 30 years on *The Sunday Telegraph*, has combined distaste for Mrs Thatcher's *persona* with approval of many of the changes which she has effected.

Like Mr Auberon Waugh, who has also occupied a leading place in *The Sunday Telegraph*, Mr Worsthorne is an upper-class Catholic or lapsed Catholic Tory who feels no need to prove himself socially. Others, feeling the need, have become snobs or élitists, have adopted the affectation of holding all élites in contempt, or have found in Mrs Thatcher's "classless Conservatism" a relief from the upper-class, public-school, metropolitan tone of the Conservative Party as it was before her.

However subdued the sexual consideration and however difficult the religious consideration once the Church of England became hooked on to the politics of the day-before-yesterday, there can be no doubt that the upper reaches of the Conservative Party during the last decade have witnessed a discreetly-conducted and unresolved class-war, which has centred around the mentality of the grammar schools of the 1940s and 1950s, the assumptions and resentments of secularised and provincial Dissent, and the sense of exclusion which made many lower-middle-class intellectuals stalwarts of Socialism between the Wars.

THE SEXUAL, RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL considerations operate in complicated ways and are sometimes difficult to trace. Political conversions are less difficult to trace, and may be the more important since the idea of a political Broad Church attracting converts may well have been in Mrs Thatcher's and Lord Joseph's minds from the start.

Certainly conversions of one sort or another have been numerous. Professor Minogue, for example, was a student Marxist in Australia in the 1950s, Professor Vincent an activist of the Left in England in the 1960s, and the late Lord Vaizey, the economist, a Labour City Councillor who had toyed with Lord Grimond's Liberal Party before eventually becoming a Thatcherite Life Peer. Sir Alfred Sherman was a Marxist volunteer in the Spanish Civil War before moving via Mr Welch and *The Daily Telegraph* to Lord Joseph and Mrs Thatcher. Mr Bruce Anderson was both a student Trotskyite and a follower of Sir Ian Gilmour before becoming the intellectual hard-liner of *The Sunday Telegraph*, and Mr Rupert Murdoch was an active member of the Oxford University Labour Club and a supporter of the Australian Labour Party before turning *The Sun* into an organ of working-class Thatcherism. Mr Paul Johnson and Lord Wyatt have been the most loyal of Mrs Thatcher's journalistic protectors in the 1980s; the one had been editor of the *New Statesman* before becoming a prolific historian, the other had been a Labour MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary to Sir Stafford Cripps, and a junior Labour Minister before becoming a Life Peer and Mrs Thatcher's Chairman of the Horse Race Totalisator Board.

Sir Alan Walters and Lord Young, two of Mrs Thatcher's more prominent advisers, were originally Labour voters, and Sir Rhodes Boyson a Labour Councillor. Lord Thomas, the present Chairman of the Centre for Policy Studies, disguises Hugh Thomas, the historian of Spain who, having been a Conservative President of the Union at Cambridge, wrote an anti-Foreign Office novel after a short period in the Foreign Office in the 1950s and was a Labour parliamentary candidate in a hopeless constituency before spending a successful and productive decade as Professor of History at Reading. Caroline Cox was a sociologist, a Socialist and a nurse before being turned by experience of lecturing at the North London Polytechnic into a Conservative Baroness-in-Waiting and Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords.

Skeletons also rattle in the cupboards of Lord Beloff, Lord Annan, Professor Julius Gould, Sir Reginald Prentice, and many others besides. There are no skeletons in my own cupboard, but I certainly said, and probably believed, in the

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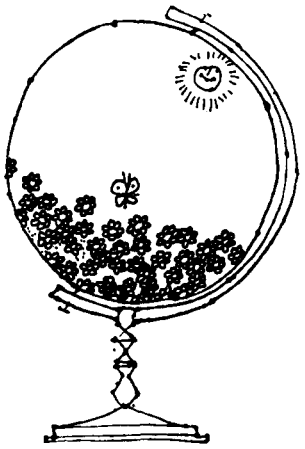
late 1960s that, if the revolting students of the Student Revolution were revolting against Lord Beloff, Lord Annan and Sir Isaiah Berlin, there must have been *something* to be said in their favour.

Authority & Liberty



DURING Mrs Thatcher's Prime Ministership there have been important changes in credit policy, prices-and-income policy and taxation policy, in television and broadcasting, exchange-control, council-house and privatisation policy, and in governmental attitudes to the professions, unemployment, the trade unions, and the Church of England, as a result of which politicians of all parties have felt obliged to agree that Mrs Thatcher has rewritten their agenda.

The remarkable nature of Mrs Thatcher's achievement is not in doubt, but many things in politics are not what they seem, and many changes which seem to have happened turn out on investigation not to have happened. Collectivism, socialism, and the higher liberalism have not gone away, politically or intellectually. Their advocates are taking a long time to regroup but they *are* regrouping, waiting for Mrs Thatcher to retire or be beaten, or judging that it is not necessary to wait for her to retire or be beaten. It would be wrong to claim more than limited gains and a rhetorical ascendancy for the uncoordinated conjunction of libertarianism and authoritarianism, scepticism and belief, doctrine and resistance to doctrine, high culture and dislike of high culture, economic truth and disdain for economic truth, which—under conflicting guidance from Hayek, Oakeshott, Butterfield, Leavis, Eliot, Powell and Mrs Thatcher—has constituted the New Right of the last 25 years.

"The New Right", in other words, has been moving in divergent directions which have converged on the belief that there should in some sense be less government rather than more, even if at times on the way this involves more government rather than less. But the change has been marginal and the explanatory assumptions unrelated to it.

The Hayekian model has had a tactical use as an antidote to Keynesianism, as justification for Capitalism, and as proof that the Conservative Party is a thinking party. The result has been a government of financial stringency and administrative reform which, though exactly what was needed at the beginning of the 1980s, has provided no resolution of the contradiction between the diminution of the scope of government through financial stringency and administrative reform, and the increases which financial stringency and administrative reform have wrought in the scope of government.

The Conservative Party is not especially innovative, is not instinctively meritocratic even now, and expresses itself in defensive idioms—about inequality and its preservation, about the crucial nature of the difference between compassion and sentimentality, and about national identity, the dignity of state power, and law and foreign policy as its primary areas of operation. In these respects, though Oakeshott is better than Hayek, neither has conceptualised the combination of politeness and negative bloodiness which is the essential antidote to liberal virtue.

Negative bloodiness is not an end in itself but is instrumental to the assertion of a conservative and national moral order which needs *active* assertion when threatened. It is a temperamental as much as an intellectual characteristic and requires a tone and posture as much as it requires an argument. The innovative arguments of the last decade have been justified in terms of the prosperity they will bring and the disasters they will avoid. The best justification is this temperamental negativity which is needed everywhere—not just in the political parties but throughout the thinking classes, and as much now as at any time in the past.

IT IS A SAFE rule to mistrust intelligentsia politics, especially when a nostrum provides a specific against the future. The business of the Conservative Party, however, is to win elections or, by its intellectual impregnability, to prevent damage being done when elections are lost. In both situations it needs reserves of belief which can be called up without having to be created on each particular occasion. In calling belief up, relating it to the requirements of situations and creating further belief in their turn, politicians are paramount. The forms and sources of belief, on the other hand, are numerous, and though not to be found among the Conservative intelligentsia alone, are to be found there, even when the intelligentsia's perceptions of timing and suitability cut across politicians' perceptions of timing and suitability, and the disjunction between them creates the impression that the Conservative Party is "anti-intellectual". In fact, Conservative "anti-intellectualism" has for over 100 years been merely one aspect of a subtle, multi-faced, highly intellectual body of assumptions about the duties of the rich and the educated, and about the nature and powers of the State, which will need to be given new twists if the Conservative Party is to negotiate its way through the coming decade.

Like *Mill and Liberalism*, this essay is a contribution to Conservative belief, to Conservative anti-intellectualism in this sense, and to the eloquence which the Conservative Party requires in order to propagate belief. Its message is that eloquence is complementary to the cynicism of democratic politics, that democratic eloquence is capable of being Conservative, and, as Mrs Thatcher has been perfectly well able to demonstrate, that the eloquence of Hayek and Adam Smith is not enough.

This, proleptically, is the context in which *Mill and Liberalism* should be placed. It was Conservative by sympathy and disposition, but, so far from being doctrinaire,

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demanded a non-doctrinaire mentality—a negative reaction which combined an anti-liberal defence of authority with a defence of liberty against "the tyranny of liberalism". Written before the Marxist movement of the 1970s and the Thatcher governments of the 1980s, it did not envisage either the sociological significance of what it was saying or the narrowing toughness which the Conservative Party would have to take on board before a Conservative conception of authority could be made credible. All it saw, but saw very clearly, was that it did not wish the existing orthodoxy to be perpetuated.

Is *Mill and Liberalism* worth reading 25 years after it was published? That is something for the reader to judge. What the author can say is that the political and intellectual climates have moved in the direction he wished them to move in when he wrote it, that the changes of direction have been compatible with the necessary moral cohesion, and that *Mill and Liberalism* speaks congenially to him, not just because it willed guilt, collectivism and the higher liberalism to go away, but because it believed that party, parliament, and public opinion could be relied on to make them do so.

In a review of *Mill and Liberalism* in 1964, a reviewer in *Sanity* (the organ of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament)[16] wrote that any nuclear disarmer who was accustomed to talking about "values, moral decision . . . and advantaging mankind in general . . . should read this book". The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament was then, as it is now, a party of virtue, so it is unlikely that the reviewer's advice was taken. But the advice had its point and retains its point in the age of the welfare worker, the liberal bishop, the race-relations and third-world industries, and the counter-cultures embodied in the Green movement, the Feminist movement and the movements which hang around Mr Kenneth Livingstone.

Quite apart from any significance which *Mill and Liberalism* may have for the interpretation of Mill, therefore, it is because its tone and posture are well suited to absorbing, outsmarting and seeing off whatever the parties of virtue—including the parties of civic and bureaucratic virtue[17]—come up with in the 1990s that the author has agreed that an unrevised reprint should be offered to the public.

[16] Tony McCarthy, "Satanic Mill?" in *Sanity*, January 1964.

[17] Bureaucratic virtue tends to be surreptitious; for a pious statement of civic virtue see Quentin Skinner, "The Paradox of Political Liberty", in S. McMurrin, ed., *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values* (1986).

Berlin Diary: 1939

The uncaptured radio reasserts its supremacy. Beethoven's Romance sounds problematic after this.

The sink mirror has poised and chased me again. The Christmas light bulb fails German ingenuity.

The neighbour next door predicts war. I predict Vienna Choir Boys will soon be asked with ham-strung invitation to join the murdered pig's knuckle of an army. I hear a frightening scream from the banister.

My helmet giggles in mockery. Stefan George deserves a wave of linden trees.

No one bothers to despair in the evanescence of the next thousand years. Stamps have the postage of blood feasts. Communion is restricted from the relatives of the Holy Family. Unreturning jaundiced stars on lapels of woollen suits are not fixed forever. A statue of Goethe has crumpled its rapt figurine. The Chopin miniature still is linen-covered.

I took my books on the ladder up to the attic. Freud has been burning for several days now in pyres, even in Frankfurt. The leader means to outlaw miracles, except his own.

Scissors are hard to come by. Berlin needs a missing persons' bureau. Everyone demands order, even the absent poets.

A cat makes its entrance above the canal. The cathedrals are packed with shirts of the just beheaded. Only the blind man on the corner is not spellbound.

B. Z. Niditch

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A cross-section of our growth, past, present and future.

May we ask you a couple of questions?

One. Which do you think is the most useful invention of the past hundred years or so?

Two. Which do you think will grow fastest in the next fifty?

You're bound to consider the internal combustion engine, the aeroplane, atomic energy and the microchip, of course. But how about telecommunications?

You have to admit there's a case to be made for them, and it's timely to make it now.

It'll take a short history lesson but we promise to make it as painless as possible.

1866, the Entrepreneur.

The founder of Cable and Wireless was a rather vigorous and determined entrepreneur called John Pender.

In 1866 he was responsible for laying the first transatlantic submarine cable.

With the dots and dashes of the Morse Code, it meant the United Kingdom was only a few minutes away from the eastern seaboard of the United States (Stock Exchange and Wall Street closing prices were transmitted daily).

By the end of the century he'd created a submarine cable empire that virtually covered the world and stretched for fifty thousand miles.

Unending success beckoned? Not exactly.

1920's, the Italian.

A young Italian scientist called Marconi had earlier patented his radio device and now offered a transatlantic telegraph service (the one which brought Crippen to trial).

It was three times faster than cable at about one twentieth of the cost.

Marconi made the British government an offer they couldn't refuse: that his telegraph service and our cable assets be merged.

It was a happy marriage which, helped by the new technology, prospered even during the depressed thirties.

1950's, the voice.

Then in the mid 1950's the first coaxial cable was laid across the Atlantic, carrying distant voices. (Though you still had to queue-up to make a call.)

But the pace of innovation was quickening.

Rockets placed satellites in space, to and from which we bounce messages on 44,000 mile journeys between our earth stations round the world.

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Next came larger coaxials, then the miraculous fibre-optic cable carrying voice and data at the speed of light (the entire Encyclopaedia Britannica in a flash).

Now, computers and microwaves all play their part, but our real growth as a company has accelerated in the past four years.

1981, the new freedom.

In 1981 the government privatised us in its belief that companies flourish when managers are free to act in an entrepreneurial spirit (shades of John Pender).

We are proud to say we have repaid its trust.

Mid-1980's, the explosion.

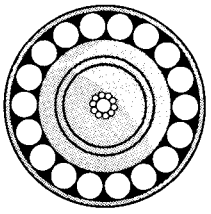
There's nothing new in people's urge to communicate of course. But as international business has grown, this urge has now assumed unprecedented proportions.

Just about every country in the world is expanding and updating its telecommunications. And new technology is constantly needed to make systems faster, cheaper and more effective over greater distances.

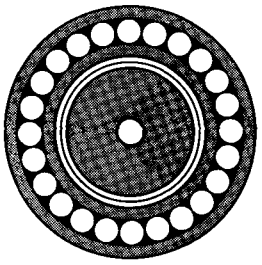
Currently in fact, we're improving and maintaining systems in some thirty-six countries.

In Hong Kong we operate both its internal and external telecommunications systems.

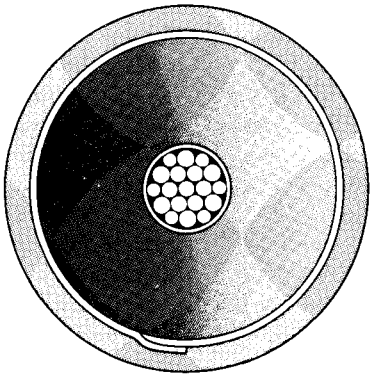
During 1985 we agreed with China to study together the feasibility of establishing up-to-date telecommunications between the main cities of the Yangtze Delta.



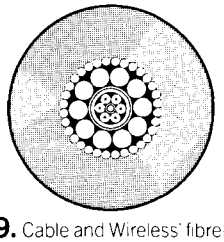
1866. First successful transatlantic cable. Roughly six months to transmit the Bible by Morse Code.



1956. First coaxial cable across the Atlantic. Thirty-six circuits bring phone calls as we know them today.



1974. Over 1,800 circuits – queuing eliminated.



1989. Cable and Wireless' fibre-optic cable to America. 12,000 circuits able to transmit the Encyclopaedia Britannica in a few zips of light.

Meanwhile, in America we've laid fibre-optic cable along the railroad from Dallas to Houston and we are operating circuits from New York to Washington and soon, Chicago.

In Barbados we are co-operating with the government to bring the latest digital communications to the island and help its main industry, tourism.

In Bahrain, we have a 40% stake in one of the most advanced telecommunications services in the Middle East and we manage the entire system.

While in 1984, our ships laid a submarine cable linking Australia and New Zealand with Canada via Fiji and Hawaii – eight thousand miles in all.

The long-term view.

We hope we have shown how Cable and Wireless has grown bigger as the world, in communication terms, has grown smaller.

However, if you would like to know more, write to the Press Office, Cable and Wireless plc, Mercury House, Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8RX.

Cable and Wireless.

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W. A. C. Adie

The Long March to the Market

Through "Turmoil" to Trade?

THE MOST SURPRISING thing about China's white terror of June 1989 is the number of people who were surprised by the events. Shooting had already been reported from Tibet in March, and Amnesty International and other sources (including the authorities of the People's Republic of China) had recorded serious violations of human rights from time to time, notably during the decade of "Cultural Revolution" from 1966-76. Reports in the Chinese as well as in the foreign mass media over the last couple of years had made it clear that Peking was losing control.

As Deng Xiao-ping put it afterwards, "Things were bound to come to a head". Once he and his veterans had defined the situation as "turmoil"—a key word in China—the response was predictable, on precedents from both Communist and Chinese history. For the régime was not facing merely a peaceful student "pro-democracy movement". The *Beijing Daily* for 15 June 1989 attributed to "a student" this ambiguous understatement:

> "The events of the last two months were absolutely not as simple as most people have thought. . . . Unfortunately, kind people always simplify complicated matters."

Twenty years ago, my thumbnail sketch of the Cultural Revolution[1] had been viewed as unkind, even "derisive". I saw it as:

> ". . . an enigmatic multiple power struggle, wrapped in a crusade and superimposed upon a scattering of more or less spontaneous, more or less politicised, student riots, strikes, mutinies and palace coups."

W. A. C. ("IAN") ADIE MA (OXON) *specialised in Asian and international political economy since 1954 with the British Foreign Service, the Australian Government (Trade Negotiations, Bisuness), at Oxford and at various universities in the USA and Australia. Now a member of the Directing Staff of the Australian Management College, he has made several visits to China in recent years to conduct seminars on management and administration.*

The Peking media abundantly confirmed and elaborated on those words after the upheavals of 1976 (which so paradoxically previewed those of this year), and they continued to do so right up to the climax in June 1989 which unveiled glimpses of the same features—here a tooth, there a claw.

Those scenes which shocked the world on TV dramatised the long-grinding tectonic clash between the effects of the "Second Revolution" of modernisation-and-opening-to-the-world (M & O)—which were only the latest in a long tradition of top-down "reforms" going back to the 1950s, the 1890s, AD 1066 if not 10 . . . —and the traditional sabotage of reform by bureaucratic élites, and suppression of any resulting "turmoil" among the masses. Precedents abound; but this time things are different, thanks to the massive, however unintended, benefits of that M & O card which Deng Xiao-ping played on his return to hegemony in 1978. As his late protégé and chosen successor-and-reject Hu Yao-bang said in 1984, it had been as important a revolution as the Communist one. For the first time in history the conditions had been created for effective reform—from below and from outside, as well as from above.

The 1978 policy was intended to renew the régime's legitimating myth in the guise of a socialism with Chinese characteristics, dropping Maoist social-engineering ("class struggle", or gardening from horseback) in favour of engineering *tout court*. Instead, it disempowered the Centre and brought to the rural sector dizzy successes in commercialisation, monetisation, and massive industrialisation—followed by crisis, food shortages, re-rationing, and unrest (farmers kill tax-gatherers, etc). On the urban-industrial front, while Peking was diligently devising pilot projects to galvanise the uneconomic State sector, a new collective and private sector boomed up behind its back with another unplanned miracle, followed by a remarkable mix of inflation, bank runs and panic buying, money supply blow-out, unemployment and mass migration to boom areas like Canton, murders of factory managers, train robberies, other serious crimes—and more booming growth. Meanwhile, a better-educated generation arose (over 60,000, not counting language students, had studied abroad). Many of them were products of the one-child policy, and they were inspired by

[1] W. A. C. Adie, "China's Second Liberation in Perspective", *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, February 1969.

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the older "intelligentsia" who manned think-tanks and published objective research and diverse opinions in thousands of new media outlets.

At a fateful semi-secret meeting last autumn, the Party elders turned down Secretary-General Zhao's daring plan for a *fuite en avant*, another Leap Forward into liberalisation. They retreated from "the market". Now scholars are in exile, in hiding, or in disgrace; and the future of Zhao Ziyang, their sponsor, is unclear. The "winners" in the June events, however, have in the end lost both hegemony and *Dao*, that all-important moral influence which (rather than the constitutional forms, which were not observed when it came to the crunch) was always their source of power. On the other hand, the outlook for the people of China and for the rest of us is good, provided that the situation is properly understood and handled—especially as regards the security of Hong Kong and its inhabitants.

IRREVERSIBLY, the People's Republic of China (especially its coastal regions) has become part of a global, borderless market of goods, funds, and information; it is daily more linked to and becomes more like Taiwan, South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Chinatowns around the world (there are at least 40 million overseas Chinese). With the imported gadgetry and fashion of the Japanese-style *shoohi kakumei* (consumer revolution) have come new thoughts and unfilial behaviour; expectations of what the French Revolution of 1789 had promised but never delivered, and a *soupçon* of Paris 1968, Kwangju, and Manila as well. Not to mention Japan's demonstration of how to shift a played-out patriarchal régime towards more substantive democracy, without violence.

The main factor in this revolution has been communications technology; the main agent of change (as distinct from the M & O policy which catalysed it) was the "bottom-up" influence of investment and the transfer of technology, managerial skills, etc., above all, from and *via* Hong Kong to the specially opened coastal zones and beyond. This is why it is so important, for the good of the millions of Chinese and for the development rather than collapse of the liberal international trading system, that proper arrangements be made to ensure the preservation of a democratic and prosperous Hong Kong after 1997.

> *"If China is not to perish, as past history tells us, the future holds a tremendous surprise for the murderers.*
> *This is not the conclusion of an incident, but a new beginning. Lies written in ink can never disguise facts written in blood. Blood debts must be repaid in kind. The longer the delay, the greater the interest!"*
> **Lu Xun** *(1881-1936)*

THUS CHINA'S GREATEST modern writer and revolutionary, writing of the massacre of 18 March 1926 when the Peking warlord troops fired on some 30,000 patriots who were carrying on the tradition of 4 May 1919, when students had massed to protest against the authorities' collusion with Japan. On 3 June 1926, Shanghai workers struck to protest against the ensuing "crackdown". . . . On the night of 3-4 June 1989, once again something old but not eternal broke the surface of modernisation to claw back "the masses" from an adulthood of "science and democracy" (the slogans of 1919), and return them to an infancy of lie-by-decree and head-down dwarfed submission.

To quote Lu Xun again: "In the end the simplest and best way to describe Chinese history would be to distinguish between two types of period: *(1)* The time when the people vainly yearn to be able to have the stable condition of slaves; *(2)* The times when the people temporarily get to enjoy that stable condition of slaves."[2]

A bit harsh, but it encapsulates how the dynastic cycle has coopted "turmoil" *(hunluan)* in order to renew itself, in the absence of any mean between flux and standstill such as Plato found in the heavens, the Polity, and the Laws. On 26 April 1989, a *People's Daily* editorial, allegedly reflecting the view of Deng Xiao-ping, accused the Tian An Men demonstrators of plotting "turmoil", contrary to previous Party assessments. If this upheaval was allowed to go unchecked, it said, all the Party's reform programmes and perhaps the achievements of the last ten years would disappear into thin air:

> ". . . programmes on which the highest hopes of all the people of our country, including the great majority of young students, are placed . . . such as reform and opening up to the outside world, regularisation and rectification, construction and development, opposition to the phenomena of corruption, the construction of democracy and a system of law . . . ."

This editorial, together with subsequently published statements and measures attributed to Deng Xiao-ping, suggests another adroit compromise between the disparate tendencies towards warlordism and reform. We must remember that Deng was brought up in a hard school, not in the "Western" tradition, although unlike Mao he studied for several years in France. (So did Pol Pot.) His grandfather, a famous scholar, was at one time tutor to Emperor Chien Lung.

In the Chinese tradition, the relationship of such élite persons to their superiors in both family and hierarchy/bureaucracy was regulated by *Li*—the rules of behaviour reflecting the status and "face" of the actors, which have been defined by one sociologist as "a power-orientated quality of interaction connected with a position of authority in some kind of enduring group structure . . . the real basis for their power". As the Qing dynasty's Sacred Edict put it, *Li* are for the élite (the literati, or scholar-gentry), and *Fa*—laws in the sense of prohibitions and punishments—are for the common people.

Of old, a scholar could remonstrate with a ruler or commit suicide to shame his times, as did Chu Yuan (c. 343-289 BC), in whose honour the Dragon Boat races are still held every year. That tradition lives on; but in Deng's case his patrons and mentors were other octogenarians inured to slaughter by revolutionary war and by Mao Tse-tung, who (as Andrei Gromyko's memoirs tell us) thought it would be a good idea to lure American troops into China and then use Soviet nuclear bombs on them. No wonder his chosen successor, Mars-

[2] Lu Xun, *Collected Works* (Peking, 1963), vol.1, pp. 311-12.

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hal Lin, gave Mao the code name "B-52" in the plans for his assassination towards the end of their murderous "Cultural Revolution". (In the event, what Mao called "a drop of disinfectant" disposed of the Lin family.)

Like the late Premier Zhou En-lai, Deng realised the need to associate educated civilians and technocrats with the building of a China made strong through modernisation of agriculture, industry, national defence, and science and technology. Ironically, Deng had been purged in 1976 for inciting the students to demonstrate, on 5 April that year, at the Monument to the People's Heroes in Tien An Men Square, during the Ching Ming festival when ancestors are commemorated. The wreaths they laid in honour of Zhou, bearing inscriptions implying dissatisfaction with Mao and "the Gang of Four", were removed by the authorities. The students then declared:

> "China is no longer the China of ancient times. And the people are no longer wrapped in sheer ignorance . . . .
>
> Gone for good is Qin Shi-huang's feudal society [Mao's model, the first Emperor] . . . what we want is real Marxism-Leninism! . . .
>
> The day the Four Modernisations are achieved, we shall return to offer libations and sacrifices."

The Birdcage Economy

After the end of Mao and his "gang" later that year, Deng's comeback began with the support of such veterans as Marshal Ye Jianying. They imposed on him an additional four requirements, which were irreconcilable with "the Four Modernisations". In the end, they boiled down to one—preserving the dictatorship of the Party. The bird must stay in the cage.

This came to mean the establishment of three public echelons of senior Party leadership, and one—more powerful than visible—of "respected elders". It was to these that Deng publicly attributed responsibility for the decision to declare martial law and for its implementation in June 1989,[3] just as his then protégé Zhao Ziyang was accused of spilling the beans to his opposite number, Mikhail Gorbachov, that Deng was still really in charge, although officially his only post was head of the party's Military Commission.

As in 1978, the octogenarians wanted to save "socialism", and through it the Party; but in ten years the Party had changed. The cage in which wise old Deng and his owlish brood had been allowed to flutter in pursuit of the right mice has acquired a Brezhnevite tinge of gilt. Fang Lizhi, the dissident astrophysicist, quipped that under the Guomindang (i.e. Chiang Kai-shek) rule of mainland China, four big families had turned the economy upside down; but now there were four hundred, and "I don't know how much they have in their offshore bank accounts".

Cynics noted that the winners in June seemed to be the President of the People's Republic of China, General Yang Shang-kun; his younger brother Yang Baibing (head of the General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army, which effectively took charge when the leadership appeared divided on handling of the student movement); his son-in-law, Chi Haotian (Chief of Staff of the PLA); and his grandson Yang Jianhua (Commander of the 27th Field Army, which led the assault on Peking's city centre). However, Zhao's replacement as Party figurehead was the polyglot Soviet-trained electrical and mechanical engineer Jiang Zemin, a former mayor of Shanghai who had distinguished himself by suppressing its most outspoken journal and its "pro-democracy" demonstrations without having to call in the Army. Nicknamed by China's sharpest tongues *huajiazi* (flower stand), because it looks good and does nothing, he is, rather, a "stepping-stone" person, no fool around foreigners—and son-in-law of veteran and former President Li Xian-nien.

In some ways the Chinese Communist Party has been getting more like the factionalised and gerontocratic Liberal Democrat Party in Japan. Many other senior officials are related to Marshals Li, Ye, Nie Rongzhen, etc. Nothing wrong with that; but, when you begin to look at big business, the members of the *taizi dang* ("crown princes") party begin to glitter in the murk. One of Deng's sons-in-law, son of a senior soldier, is President of Poly Technologies Inc., a leading Chinese company in the international arms trade —the Army is active in all sorts of business, including tourist hotels. Many scions of the veterans have gathered to make money in Shenzhen Special Economic Zone next to Hong Kong, and this had much to do with the changes for the better which, thanks to the decade of "reform", had been going on outside and despite the ruling élite.

The Communiqué of the epoch-making Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee, held in December 1978, had called for "changes in all methods of management, actions and thinking which stand in the way" of the growth in productive forces required by the Four Modernisations "for the consolidation of the dictatorship of the proletariat in our country". Now that "large-scale turbulent class struggles of a mass character have in the main come to an end", it said, all should "pool their efforts and carry out the new long march to make China a modern, powerful, socialist country before the end of this century". The Eleventh Central Committee also reversed the verdict passed by their predecessors on the Tian An Men events of 5 April 1976, which now became "entirely revolutionary actions". They rehabilitated leaders who had been "victims of frame-ups"—such as General Yang Shang-kun, the constant bridge part-

[3] Jerome A. Cohen, the expert on Chinese law, has raised doubts as to the constitutional legitimacy of the martial law régime in Peking: "Indeed it appears that, in recent years, the Party has secretly operated on an illegitimate basis" (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, no. 13, July 1989). However that may be, the extensive troop movements around the country and the deployment of air-to-surface missiles in the capital suggest that the June massacre was merely one by-product of an incipient *coup d'état*.

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ner of Deng Xiao-ping. And they "held a serious discussion" on democracy and the legal system:

> "The correct concentration of ideas is only possible when there is democracy . . . . Procuratorial and judicial organisations must maintain their independence as is appropriate . . . serve the people's interests, keep to the facts . . . and deny anyone the privilege of being above the law."

The drafting showed concern for "checks and balances" between what might be tagged the "spring" and "winter" lines (or clans) in the Party—those who sought to swim on the tide of "democracy", if only to outflank their rivals, and those who wished to dam it in the name of stability, if only to grasp power.

You will recall that in 1979 there was a "Peking Spring", with plenty of wall-posters, when Deng needed a spontaneous mass movement to help get rid of Mao's successor, Hua Guo-feng. It was orchestrated by Hu Yaobang, the Party General-Secretary, who in 1987 was forced to resign for permitting "bourgeois liberalism". As the saying goes, when the hares are all gone, the hounds go into the pot. One fine day the posters were scraped off Democracy Wall, and the student Wei Jing-sheng went to prison, where he remains, for arguing that a Fifth Modernisation—democracy—was needed in order for the others to work.

All the same, good intentions had been expressed in that Central Committee document, even if they were cautiously qualified. So how did the second Long March lose its way? And why do I think it will get there in the end? After the terror and more than a whiff of grapeshot in advance, is Peking nearing its 1789? (Some of the Tian An Men demonstrators openly threatened to "storm the Bastille" and arrest Deng & co.)

FOUR PLUS ONE (democracy) = Modernisation. Four in one = Oriental Despotism. The clash of the economic and political foursomes ensured that in playing the card of modernisation and sponsoring the relevant executors, Deng started not with a *tabula rasa* but with a multiply flawed inheritance.

Its conceptual basis was described by one Chinese social scientist as a mix of feudal privilege, Stalinism, and the experience of the wartime liberated areas—and by a Western economist, Jan S. Prybyla, as a vacuum rationalised as pragmatism.

Its method, officially described as "crossing the river while groping for the stones"—in other words, the 19th-century dream of grafting foreign techniques for "use" *(yong)* on to an unchanged Chinese core or body *(ti)*—was modernised into a "reverse engineering" model of eclecticism based on trial-and-error.

When you took a captured tommy-gun to bits and copied the parts to make another, it more or less worked; but this procedure was not so effective with a Boeing 707, much less with economic and management techniques which are not too successful in the advanced industrial countries either. In spite of the excellent work of think-tanks and scholars, there was a certain amount of non-functional replication—as in the case of the early Japanese export pencils which had a little black dot at each end, and no lead; or the marble warship; or Shenzhen; or the proposed Hainan racecourse where betting was to be forbidden. . . .

It was flawed, too, in the instrument—the more than 20 million "cadres", twice as many Party members, and the soldiery. As in previous attempts to reform China from above, those who were to carry out the Centre's policies of marketisation and monetisation were those who stood to lose the privileges they had from the existing rank- and power-based system. Many were illiterate, according to Xia Yan—in 1930 the venerable co-founder (with Lu Xun) of the Leftist Writers' Association—because of the neglect of education since Liberation. (This was confirmed by a *Beijing Review* item headed "Illiteracy Threatens Modernisation".) "The key point", Xia Yan had continued, "is that no one has a consciousness of the legal system, and there is no understanding of any laws whatsoever". The third major "mistake" he identified was the birth rate, about which he felt nothing could be done.

At the end of last year, the journal *Lilun Xinxi Bao (Theoretical Information)* denounced "vulgar power-worship" in today's China:

> "The 'cultural revolution' presented the most ridiculous and longest farce of power treading law ever seen in China. Even today, many power-wielders still hold that the law is to deal with the enemy or restrain the masses, and has nothing to do with them. . . . In our society, some people . . . try their best to transform power into property . . . writing a slip of paper is power; a ticket is power; and a signature is power."

The veteran Peng Zhen, former Mayor of Peking and long associated with attempts to promote legality, told the Hong Kong Communist paper *Da Gong Bao*:

> "We want to carry out all sorts of reforms—but how? . . . It is only after we have acquired some experience that we can write it into law . . . if the State Council [Cabinet] is not able to take any action until the law is on the books, then we cannot acquire any experience. And as long as we have not acquired any experience, we won't know how to frame the law."

Deng himself deplored the neglect of education, but turned out to mean by that word indoctrination in Communist theory and the old style of plain living and hard struggle.

IN SPITE OF all this, the "sweet-sour decade" over which Deng presided had "witnessed the most dynamic and rapid growth since New China was founded in 1949, while living standards [rose] faster than ever before", as the Vice-President of the Academy of Sciences, Liu Guogang, put it in January 1989. But he went on to explain the emergence of inflation, unfair income distribution, and a "drop in social morals" in terms of the three main stages of restructuring: first, from the Third Plenary of the Eleventh

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Central Committee in December 1978 to the Third Plenary of the Twelfth Central Committee in October 1984; from then to the Thirteenth Party Congress in October 1987; and from then to the time at which he was writing.

In Stage One, partial liberation of the rural "productive forces" saw rural *industry* increase by 266% from 1983-86, with 120 million peasants employed in it by August 1987. The commune system was replaced by a family joint-production contract system (with land, in effect, loaned to the tillers indefinitely), remuneration linked to output (although still below market prices), and the balance of prices between agricultural inputs and products altered in favour of the farmers at the cost of enormous subsidies to keep urban food prices down. Last year, for instance, RMB 28 billion[4] (equivalent to US $7.5 billion) were spent on grain subsidies.

In practice, the local cadres overcharged for fertiliser and the government could not pay for the compulsory grain deliveries because in Stage Two, from 1984 on, "sourness" had increased. The traditional agricultural system had reached its ceiling, while in the urban-industrial sector measures intended to enable Peking to control the economy more loosely through the market only created what one Chinese economist described as a multi-level State Economy, and the head of the Euro-China management school in Beijing named "industrial feudalism".

In Liu Guogang's words, in the cities "a series of initial reforms and experiments was introduced in production, circulation, pricing, labour and wages, commerce, material supply, and foreign trade". Reforms in scientific research and education also began. It was a mammoth task. The devolution of powers to enterprises and a decrease in the number of commodities subject to central mandatory planning and pricing did not, however, "increase the role of the market mechanism" so much as create a plethora of mini-command economies which dodged central control just as "the Greap Leap Forward" and the "People's Communes" of 1958, and the more pragmatic policies of the early 1960s, had overshot and spawned "watertight" fiefs.

The Director of the Office of Research on Agricultural Villages of the State Council reported in April 1989 that:

> "The reform of the economic system with the two-track price system as its core has created opportunities for bureaucratic profiteering . . . it has ruined the morale of society. . . . A great surging wave of reform, that had downward delegation of authority and permission to keep profits as its main characteristics, has been blocked."

A member of the Academy of Sciences pointed out in the same issue of *Wide Angle Monthly* that:

> "Our country can only be called a multi-level State economy . . . all the economic units belong to governments at various levels [e.g. central, provincial, municipal and local, county, township, and village levels]. Moreover, the people in charge of enterprises have different levels on the basis of the administrative office that manages them. For example, there is the provincial or military region level, municipal/local/county level, department head or assistant department head level. . . . In the allocation and exchange of plant quotas, labour, fringe benefits, labour insurance and the materials of production, all these various enterprises enjoy different treatment according to their level. For example, there is now an acute shortage of electricity all over the country; yet [it] is available at different prices: the 'plan' price, the 'mixed price' and the 'negotiated' price. Which price an enterprise has to pay depends on its level. Major state-run enterprises are more frequently granted the 'plan' price; county and township enterprises and individual household enterprises are rarely or never granted it."

This long quotation from the horse's mouth gives the flavour of many others.

While the multiple-track price system alone was enough to turn many officials into black-marketeers, the policy on foreign trade and opening to the outside world reinforced both the good and the bad sides of burgeoning entrepreneurship by re-establishing something like the old treaty-port system on the coast, seen by Deng as potentially "many Hong Kongs". In consequence (to quote Liu Guogang again):

> "China has a vast open belt along its coast, embracing more than a million people, which will gradually expand inland. By the end of 1987, China had approved 9,973 foreign-funded enterprises, of which 4,300 have begun operation and 80% are in the coastal areas."

Since most of this investment comes from Chinese outside the People's Republic of China, its unintended effects have been as important as the equally startling development of rural industry which liberated millions of peasants from their millennial bondage in provisioning the cities and bureaucracy. According to the official Qing dynasty handbook on the Grand Canal, which was built in the 14th-15th centuries mainly to shift grain from the key economic area south of the Yangtze to the key strategic area north of it with the capital near the Wall, there were at one time 170,000 military and civilian officials, each with about eight household members, to be fed by the tribute. Thus, some 1,360,000 mouths needed transport of 400,000 tons *per annum* up from the Yangtze valley.

In spite of Mao's ideological emphasis on the peasantry as a revolutionary force, *his* system relied on squeezing them for capital accumulation to build industry—as far as possible on the uneconomic basis of potentially autarkic provinces—in case of war. By 1987, however, modernisation had improved productivity to such an extent that at least 200 million peasants were no longer needed on the land. Since industrialisation was blocked in the cities, it sprang up in the country—from 1982-87, gross industrial output rose by an average of 12%. Subsistence peasants, in areas previously known for exporting beggars, began to buy TV sets. . . .

Thanks to price reform, the grain harvest of 1984 overshot by 407.37 million tons 1978's planned target for the year 2000. So, in the second stage of reform, the régime officially abolished the compulsory sale of produce at its set price;

[4] *Ren Min Bi* (Yuan), the people's currency.

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farmers signed a contract instead, and the State was also to procure on the open market. In practice, however, the peasants were still pressured by local officials to deliver, while inputs were sold to them at rip-off prices. Meanwhile, as the population grew at the rate of ten million a year, the available arable land decreased each year by eight million acres, and farmers chose to grow more lucrative cash crops or engage in "sideline occupations" rather than grow grain. Then neighbours suffering from "red eye" disease (envy) or "white eye" (spite) would move in to prevent the more capable farmers from operating to capacity.

A study by a Research Fellow at the Chinese State Planning Commission's Investment Research Institute concluded that "over the last five years, China's agriculture has stagnated". Increased productivity from the decreasing sown area had mainly been achieved by "predatory operation", i.e. by the use of more artificial fertiliser per hectare (the average was 120.66 kg.) than such major producers as Canada, Australia, and the USA. China's land-management system—labour-intensive small-scale gardening—had reached its limits; and land must "now be transformed into a commodity and concentrated in the hands of farmers who have the ability to make large-scale investment" (*Beijing Review*, 1 May 1989).

By late 1988, the emerging younger generation of Chinese think-tankers were saying that the restructuring programme as a whole had reached the end of the road, notably in the case of the urban/industrial enterprises "owned by the whole people"—i.e., by the State, which meant that, in the absence of real property rights, profits were distributed among the staff according to rank. These individuals were completely dependent on "the State", but treated their position as a monopoly from which to extract maximum personal benefits.

Instead, the economists proposed "re-establishing the individual property rights of workers". A hot debate was in progress on such matters among the Party leaders as well as their theoretical advisers. Underlying it, apart from factionalism, was the fact that traditionally in China, as in Japan, who you are is where you fit in: first in a family/clan hierarchy; then, even more importantly, in the work unit—a surrogate clan, and perhaps more important as a delivery system of social control ("education") as well as of welfare: e.g. housing, or dole paid on the job by overstaffing (the iron rice-bowl syndrome) rather than as a unit producing more goods.[5]

The marketisation and devolution process had now gone far enough to uncover cracks in the system which previously had been papered over by "red-letterhead" administrative command. These included the huge excess of demand over supply for both producer and consumer goods, with sharp differences in access to them set by status, not money; the low quality of goods, services, and human resource management, etc. And out of the woodwork came "the shrine rats" whom the statesman Han Fei (*ob.* 233 BC) had identified as the chief menace to a State— the "courtiers" who abuse their influence to exploit the people, and slander each other in power struggles. In the nationwide purge which followed the June 1989 massacre, such people are reportedly being smoked out along with the "pro-democracy" elements.

In this third stage of restructuring (October 1987 to late 1988), the Central Committee sought to promulgate a firmer conceptual basis for its experiments (they were only in the long "primary stage" of building socialism), and they added reform of the political and administrative structure to the agenda—in particular, separation of Party and Government responsibilities on the basis of policy *vs.* execution. At meetings of the National People's Congress, a "democratic atmosphere" (according to the *Beijing Review* of 18 April 1988) pervaded as never before, but a year later the weather was wintry again ("NPC Session stresses Rectification", (*Beijing Review,* 27 March 1989).

Unravelling of economic control had by the end of 1986 led to too much social indiscipline, heresy among the older intelligentsia, and an open rejection of "socialism" in the course of ostensibly anti-Japanese (i.e. anti-corrupt-officialdom) student agitation. The Politburo's most forthright "reformer"—Hu Yaobang—"resigned" at an "enlarged" (read: packed) session in 1987, ostensibly for failing to curb the demonstrations; he was replaced as General Secretary by Zhao Ziyang.

The net result of restructuring the collective rural sector had been to increase productivity to the limit attainable under the contract system of net-output delivery by *households* (*baogan daohu*)—in effect, family tenant farming. The equivalent unit in industry, however, was not the family firm (though some of these were permitted to exist), but the bureaucratic enterprise or industrial barony, which was supposedly under indirect control through taxation of its retained profits, in accordance with the idea expressed by Zhao Ziyang to Milton Friedman: "We control the market, and the market controls the economy." In moving away from the previous system (in which units simply handed practically all their surplus over to the State and in return received a capital grant together with detailed orders on how to spend it), a neither-plan-nor-market, horse-trading non-system developed because, in order to work, taxation has to be combined with market and allocation-rational prices.

Though they seem to have understood the problem better than their Soviet colleagues, the Chinese planners were unable to address the root of the problem. They were forced to introduce a host of *ad hoc* taxes in order to correct the distortions resulting from the admittedly irrational administratively-set and -subsidised prices. But these extra taxes were to be raised by the local bureaucracies most closely connected with the enterprises, on what amounted to a medieval tax-farming basis. Banks, also, were unable to refuse credits to the local bosses. In 1987, however, only 6,000 out of 450,000 firms paid the adjustment tax. Small

[5] Covering the silver boom in Nevada, Mark Twain observed (*All Things Chinese*, London, 1892) that a lazy Chinese worker does not exist. But when Singapore's Premier Lee visited the People's Republic he complimented his hosts, so the story goes, for producing the impossible—lazy Chinese. The *Fortnightly Forum* (*Ban Yue Tan,* no. 13, 1988) has confirmed this: "In these overstaffed units, the line between labour and rest is not clear." The reason—"the iron rice-bowl".

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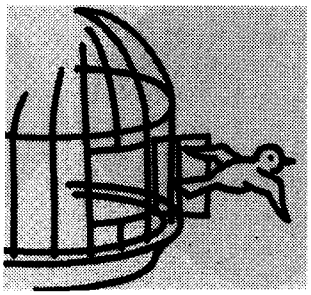
wonder that the central Government's percentage of revenue raised (25%) is the world's lowest—the two richest provinces, Guangdong and Fujian, paid nothing at all.

According to the *Farmers' Daily* (quoted in the *Asian Wall Street Journal* for 19 June 1989), widespread tax evasion had created a situation in which the Government had only half of the 20 billion Yuan (US $5.4 billion) which were needed to buy the current crops of grain, edible oils, tea, and raw silk. Hence the farmers were liable to divert their production from government sales to hoarding, or to the free market where prices were three times as high. Increased coercion would spread unrest to the countryside from the towns—where in complete "disregard for orders and bans" from Peking (as Zhao put it in his Report to the Central Committee on 26 September 1988), massive capital construction and industrialisation, wage rises, etc., had forced thousands of State factories to shut down or run below capacity because of shortages of raw materials and power, transport bottlenecks and so on. Inflation was rising to 40%, many city-dwellers' real incomes were falling—and China's society is now 40% urbanised.

Meanwhile, in the realm of "thought decontrol", the groundswell of published opinion was exemplified by a six-part television series entitled *He Shang (Demise of the Yellow River)*. It dared to say that in the face of the challenge of "Western" industrial civilisation and the general trend towards a global diffusion of culture, every ancient civilisation faces a crisis. The ancient civilisation of the Yellow River, which had several times been subjected to foreign influences, but never totally succumbed,[6] originated from the need for highly centralised organisation to mobilise tens of thousands of people to carry out water control projects—"the Asiatic mode of production". "That this sort of situation has continued right up to modern times in China is an unbounded catastrophe."

The authors of the series were most concerned for reforms, especially price reform, but felt that so far these had done "little more than sprinkle a few drops of water from the deep-blue coloured Oceanic civilisation over the parched yellow earth". What they meant by "Oceanic" was, of course, the Western system, which relies primarily on markets to assure equality of opportunity, and has an independent legal system to guarantee property and other freedoms. Instead of moving on towards such a system in a fourth stage of the restructuring process, as reportedly urged by Zhao Ziyang in August 1988, at the yearly semi-secret gathering of leaders at the seaside, the Party pulled back from the brink—of success? The cage closed in.

The Gilt Coast Strategy



CHINA'S "OPENING to the world", however, may prove to have been irreversible. From 1978, restructuring was intended to be coordinated in rural, urban, and foreign trade/investment sectors (*Mao-Gong-Nong*); but this was not to be. As a scholar from the People's Republic of China working in the US put it, the authorities had no idea how to "open the door". But a great deal was achieved, if not in the way intended.

While more foreign investment came from other Chinese than Peking had expected, some Japanese, US, European, and Australian companies went into major joint ventures inland in China, with varying success. Several withdrew, hurt, before the June 1989 events—for much the same reasons as those officially lamented by the Chinese, but usually only in private by "foreign-devil missionaries of capitalism" in the zones specially set up on the coast to attract them. Legends abound on "How China Turns Businessmen Into Basket Cases", and books and articles by such people as E. E. Bauer, Boeing's technical representative in China from 1980-85,[7] are reminiscent of the "Japan hands" early this century moaning that "these people never learn". In fact Mr Bauer does report progress. After wasting US $300 million trying to copy a Boeing 707, the Chinese gave up. But they had more success with the Australian Nomad aircraft. . . .

At the invitation of the China Enterprise Management Association, an organ of the State Economic Commission (SEC), and other bodies, I have visited north and south China several times during the last few years. There was an electrifying difference in atmosphere from the 1970s, and the obvious change in quality of life from year to year was heart-warming. Those of us who were thus invited to exchange ideas and give seminars on reform of management and administration were struck by the scale of effort and achievement by the senior officials involved—first nine million, then twelve million managers to train! The idea was "to absorb and extract the strong points of all experiences from others in the world", and to merge them into a specifically Chinese style. Japan was the model—but Japan had started with a different sort of "feudalism". And, out in the field, it was hard to avoid the impression that some older "ecomonic cadres" and even teachers of something called "management engineering" had not yet got the hang of the new philosophy.

The State Economic Commission set up training centres in various cities, in cooperation with the EEC (Peking), the USA (Dalian), etc., to observe their various methods. As the Dean of the EEC operation noted, the view of management as a branch of engineering—"as technical problem-solving"—was a legacy of the now discarded Soviet model, in which prompt achievement of physical output targets was the sole legitimate aim of enterprise managers. Their "people

[6] Wang Xiaoqiang, Deputy Director of the China Economic System Reform Institute under the State Council, pointed out last year (*Far Eastern Economic Review*, 24 March 1988) that in ancient times Europeans had come to China and copied parts of its system—hence eventually the Renaissance and the birth of capitalism. Chinese reforms did not start in 1978, he said, but in the late Qing dynasty, with swings between, totally embracing the West, and then back to tradition. Compromise must be achieved, but unlike the previous Chinese and present Soviet experiments the reforms this time had started from the grassroots and spread like an epidemic.

[7] E. E. Bauer, *China Takes Off: Technology Transfer and Modernization* (University of Washington Press, 1986).

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management", he said, could best be described as industrial feudalism. Because of the patrimonial rather than rational-legal nature of the mandarinate (as seen by Max Weber), its functioning did not reflect the impersonal application of rational rules:

> "The result is a continuous tendency towards the fragmentation and isolation of organisational units, a very parochial outlook, and considerable difficulty in integrating and coordinating large-scale activities."

Mao called it "mountain-top-ism", but it is not unique to the People's Republic of China.

A Canadian colleague warned against the emergence of a new mandarinate; its power-through-knowledge narrowly based in technology would be "as dangerous and authoritarian as the old", without the breadth of understanding that classical literary and philosophical thought had conferred. Not only quantitative methods but *judgment* is the key to achievement of modernisation, and if innovation and creative management are to be possible, legal reform and trust in due process and fairness of law must also be realised.

DESPITE THESE AND many other problems, a total of US $11.5 billion of foreign capital was invested in the People's Republic of China during the period from 1979-89, and many forms of cooperation developed—such as processing trade, compensation trade, contractual or equity joint ventures, and even wholly foreign-owned subsidiaries. Between 1979 and September 1988, the PRC had itself invested US $650 million in some 500 projects in almost 80 countries on all continents—the scale ranging from small restaurants to the Huanyu colour-TV joint venture in Britain and the giant Channar iron-ore mine in Australia which is capable of producing ten million tons a year. Between 1980 and 1987, foreign trade increased by 120%, and the Department of Policy Research and System Reform at the Ministry of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade (MOFERT) detailed in March 1989 how China was opening its doors still wider to the world, in spite of the retreat from restructuring imposed since September 1988.

Peking had let go its administrative instruments of control, on the assumption that "The market controls the economy, and we control the market" (via its commanding heights), but thanks to the shrine rats it was more black than market. From the outside world's point of view, the problems were exemplified by what was happening in the Special Economic Zones, which were ahead of the rest of the PRC in "reform".

Under a decision by the Party centre in 1979, four Special Economic Zones had been set up; in Shenzhen (Shumchun, contiguous to Hong Kong), in Zhuhai (near Macau), in Shantou (Swatow), and in Xiamen (Amoy) across from Taiwan. (Part of the Shenzhen Zone came to be a model, because it was managed by only one "mother-in-law"—the China Merchants Steam Navigation Co., which is wholly owned by China's Ministry of Communications, but operates out of Hong Kong.) The key to the agenda was *wai-yin, nei-lian*: draw in from the outside, and link up (or trickle down) to the interior. In other words, the Zones were to act as a step-down transformer for the high-tension current of capitalist technology, funds and lifestyle in Hong Kong; they were to use foreign inputs and export earnings to get raw materials from the hinterland and thus stimulate enterprise there.

At first sight, with their experimental legislation and regulations for joint ventures, the Zones seemed to imitate successfully the main features of free trade or export-processing zones in places such as Taiwan, Sri Lanka or Darwin: tax holidays, cheaper labour, and so on. . . . But in practice everything was negotiable, and squeeze—"pier tax", "bridge tax", etc.—was applied by the local cadres.

Similar if more limited incentives were offered in 1982 to Hainan Island (promoted from being merely a part of Guangdong to separate status last year) and in 1984 to fourteen coastal cities, of which only four went ahead with priority—Guangzhou (Canton), Shanghai, Tianjin (Tientsin—the port of Peking), and Dalian in the north-east (once known as Dairen or Port Arthur). Of these, Guangzhou and its province became the foremost, heading in the Zhujing (Pearl River) an "open" economic zone set up in 1984 along with the "Golden Delta" in south Fujian, which centred on Xiamen, and the Changjiang (Yangtze) delta, centred on Shanghai and Jiangsu province.

Zhao Ziyang, who had a long connection with Guangdong province, always took a strong interest in Shenzhen, encouraged by Deng Xiaoping, who took initial reponsibility for the experiment. While he was Premier, Zhao stressed that the aim of the Zones was not to create employment, but to attract foreign funds and technical and managerial skills. The hidden political agenda was "United Front Work"—the plan to draw Hong Kong, Macau, and eventually Taiwan into the fold by developing economic linkages and proving that Peking could run capitalistic enclaves.

In the event, much of the investment came not from major industrialised countries but from compatriots outside China, largely through Hong Kong; and it was concentrated in real estate, tourism, and low-technology, labour-intensive industry. So many workers were attracted to Shenzhen by the wages and conditions that an 84-kilometre fence had to be built on the border with the rest of China, with six checkpoints to control the influx.

THE OFFICIAL China System Reform Institute, a think-tank reporting to the State Council, brought out a report last year which speaks volumes. Behind the modern façade, it said, Shenzhen still operated with a command-style hierarchy, excessive political interference in economic activity, and unfair competition generated by monopolies, personal connections (*guanxi*), and politically-linked economic favours. Price, market, and planning reforms touch only the surface of the old order . . . hence political as well as economic reforms were essential if Shenzhen was to be an effective cushion between Hong Kong and China.

Some progress had been made towards the market, but traditional values and ways had also infiltrated—for exam-

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ple, Shenzhen still used the old-style red-letterhead official chits to regulate most economic and social activities. As the Hong Kong *Far Eastern Economic Review* comments, such documents, which are used at all levels of the Chinese bureaucracy to transmit official information and policies, are usually ambiguous, incomplete, and not legally binding. It is expected that the spirit of the policy outlined will be grasped through a reading of the prevailing political climate.

Peking saw the Special Economic Zones as a means to use, restrict, and transform (Finlandise) Hong Kong, Macau, and Taiwan. But as in Eastern Europe (e.g. Poland and Hungary) it was reverse Finlandisation which was demonstrated by "the Shekou incident" of January 1988. Three Commissars from the Peking Research Centre for the Ideological Education of China's Youth came down for a symposium put on by the China Merchants Steam Navigation Company. Some 70 locals ridiculed the northerners' one-way Party rhetoric. One of them said, "We have more freedom here. The central government is far away!" Asked by the northern cadre if he dared reveal his name, the youth handed over a business card.

After some furore over this in the Party press, the head of the CMSNC told the *People's Daily*:

> "One, we don't welcome empty preaching as if from master to pupils. . . . Two, I am all for the principle, 'I don't agree with you, but I will try every means to defend your right to express different opinions'."

This episode may frighten a few old men in Peking, but from the viewpoint of the masses was it not another liberation?—this time from below, through the spread of purchasing power and information and largely thanks to Hong Kong.

THE CHINESE and their capitalist partners have, of course, been dreaming different dreams in the same bed. In 1895, the great reformer Kang Yuwei pointed out that, "As to foreign trade, obviously China has to meet the competition from the West and Japan by developing her own products, by boosting native Chinese trading companies, by studying Western business methods, by translating Western business texts and developing the teaching of marketing skills". (The Dowager Empress purged him after 100 days of reform, thus ensuring the demise of the Manchu dynasty.)

The 1842 Treaty of Nanking, which ceded Hong Kong to Britain, led to its development from a "barren rock" to the international financial and trading centre of today.[8] One of the arguments now used to justify the surrender of Hong Kong's territory, regardless of its people, to the State which presently controls Peking (not the same one that signed the treaties at issue) is that it lays such golden eggs. China's Foreign Minister, Qian Qichen, has said that it is irreplaceable. (But, now we know that Peking has other priorities, what about Canton?)

A few figures suggest Hong Kong's importance to the people of China, especially to Guangdong whose growth rate is expected to reach a respectable 20% this year (after overshooting to 31% in 1988). In addition to tens of thousands of outward-processing and compensation trade projects, there are now several thousand joint-venture factories with Hong Kong in Guangdong alone. They account for between 40-60% of realised direct foreign investment in China (totalling US $18.9 billion from 1979-88); and as many as two million people in Guangdong are working for Hong Kong-owned businesses which, due to the lack of infrastructure on the Chinese mainland, largely depend on Hong Kong marketing, design, and sourcing of components.

With the advent of China's biggest black market which, as well as multiple prices, uses three currencies—*Yuan,* foreign exchange certificates, and Hong Kong dollars—has come a new life-style. Surveys co-sponsored by MOFERT and a Hong Kong firm found that 77% of households in Canton had electric rice-cookers, as against 1% in Shanghai and 2% in Peking. According to the Hong Kong journal *Cheng Ming*, some of China's leaders fear that by 1997—when Hong Kong and its territories are due to be returned to mainland China —there will be "a Shenzhen modelled on Hong Kong, a Guangdong modelled on Shenzhen, a whole country modelled on Guangdong".

Before the June events, Guangdong had the highest living standards and export earnings in China, and the freewheeling provincial authorities hoped to quadruple their 1980 output by 1990, five years ahead of the other provinces. They had already perfected the art of echoing Peking's decrees and acting to the contrary, so it remains to be seen how the ban on imports of "new opium"—Marlboros, Scotch whisky, etc.—will be handled.

The dissident journalist Liu Binyan and others who escaped the "crackdown" foresee another of those periods in Chinese history in which the writ of the Northern government does not run far south. But decentralisation need not mean chaos. Hong Kong is there to show how prosperity can be built on law and on an administrative system which has been more consensual than appears from outside.

IN VIEW OF the public awakening and debates in its Legislative Council, Hong Kong can and must receive from the People's Republic of China a bullet-proof guarantee in the form of democracy, a Bill of Rights, and protection from those implications of the Sino-British Joint Declaration and "Basic Law" which have become unthinkable—such as Peking's right to send in its Army to suppress "turmoil".

"Right of abode in the UK" is a red herring. As the members of the Legislative Council have pointed out in the document *Hong Kong is Our Home*, what the 3.25 million British (and therefore EEC) citizens want is protection in that home, not a right to exile. For the other inhabitants too, pride in their Chinese heritage need not imply subjection to

[8] It also turned the heads of the staid cutlers of Sheffield. They sent out a large consignment of knives and forks for sale to the millions of Chinese who, for their part, claimed to have abandoned the use of such articles when they became civilised. A London piano-maker sent out an equally large consignment, in the expectation that, out of 200 milion Chinese women, one in 200 would want a piano in her parlour. . . .

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whoever occupies Peking, legitimately or not. On 30 June, Dame Lydia Dunn quoted to the Foreign Correspondents' Club the words of the late newspaper columnist Tsang Ki-fan:

> "This is the only Chinese society that, for a brief span of less than 100 years, lived through an ideal never realised at any other time in the history of Chinese societies—a time when no man had to live in fear of the midnight knock on the door."

But journalists have much to answer for in perpetuating muddled thinking about the "return" of Hong Kong to "China"—the name of a geographical and/or cultural area not to be confused with the political entities which have risen and fallen in it over time.

I WROTE in 1965 that, "The interests of the world at large require that Hong Kong should on the one hand receive adequate outside assistance in solving its economic problems and, on the other, that anomalies in its status, and that of its residents, should be removed by suitable international arrangements and internal political development"—i.e., by democratic self-government, which I believed would prove an even more valuable example than its economic success. Is this not still the case?[9]

Kang Yuwei rightly pointed out, in 1898, that:

> "At present, in an age of international rivalry, it is not a unified world [like China after 221 BC]. But our present [Qing dynasty] laws and bureaucratic system are the institutions of that unified world and they are the causes of China's present weakness and even collapse. Indeed, they should all be abolished."

As a present-day Chinese scholar has observed, the "Western" nation-state system owes much to the Qing model as purveyed by the Jesuits, Leibniz, and other *philosophes* who were perfectly aware that it was a *mikrokosmos* separate from the rest of the world.[10]

Mao Zedong himself said that China was a United Nations in itself. Now we have one world for which the nation-states' laws and bureaucracies are equally anachronistic, not thanks to the United Nations Organisation, but because (as the *Beijing Review* quoted Chinese scholars in the PRC, Taiwan, and Hong Kong discussing) the new international system now emerging of its own accord is based more on economic regions and on corporations networking across borders, than on political divisions. A loose federation of such regions already exists *de facto* in the Chinese cultural area. Professor Chen of Hong Kong University says that the economies of China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong are already very integrated, through Hong Kong, without any need for negotiations on political reunification, which he sees as almost impossible in the near future. Quoting the same source, the international magazine *Business Week* ran a feature in September 1988 about the "Rise of Greater China as an Economic Power"; it was subtitled "Potent mix: China's labour, Taiwan's skills, Hong Kong's financial might".[11]

It should have mentioned something more. For perhaps Deng is right when he argues that China is too big to be run Western-style from Peking with separation of powers (we want one, not three governments!), but he is also right in calling, reportedly, for "many Hong Kongs" to flourish on the coast. Flowers can be cut, but not grown from horseback; tanks, surveillance cameras, and ring-in denunciations can only cow those within range; Genghis Khan has a telephone, but thousands of Chu Yuans, Kang Yuweis, and Sun Yat Sens—people with knowledge and principles—now have access to shortwave radio, fax, and satellite TV, or are out of reach abroad. They are now the best hope for the development of a market-based "federal China" of the people, by the people, and for the people as suggested by various scholars.

After the June massacre, an unknown announcer on Radio Beijing joined Yang Xianyang—the famous translator of Lu Xun (with his wife Gladys)—in "denouncing the barbarous repression". When asked by a Western journalist whether it was not risky to speak in these terms, Yang said on air that the authorities could put him on their list: "We are 1,000 million Chinese, and they can't kill us all."

All the invaders of Peking have to do is dismount—and let the people get on with it. . . .

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[9] W. A. C. Adie, section on Hong Kong in Guy Wint, ed., *Asia Handbook* (Anthony Blond, 1965, Penguin 1969). On China's opening to the world and the role of Hong Kong, I have written in more detail for a forthcoming issue of *International Relations*.

[10] Athanasius Kircher, *China Illustrata* (Amsterdam, 1677), p.164: "*Tum naturae tum ingenii politici artibus ita instructum est, ut a reliquo orbe prorsus separatum, absolutum* mikrokosmon *a nullo altero dependentem constituere videatur.*"

> "[China] was so skilled in the arts of natural and political philosophy, that it seemed to constitute a microcosm, completely separate from the rest of the world, self-contained, and dependent on no one else."

See also my article on China and the International System, *Lugano Review*, no. 3 (1975).

[11] Li Jiquan, "More on reunification of Taiwan with the Motherland", *Beijing Review* (vol. 32, no. 3), 16 January 1989; *Business Week*, September 19 1988.

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John Lancaster

Pure Research

He has progressed
from lefthandedness
and righthandedness
in mice to studying
the movement patterns
of a snake's head.
This is a collaboration
at the Sorbonne, Paris:
a term each year.
A professor, his teaching
is in Toronto where
each night he buys
a bottle of brandy
then drives ten miles
to the cabin they built
on the edge of the forest.
In his absences, she
has taught herself batik
and other techniques
of surface pattern.
She has started to sell.
By midnight, she sleeps
while he, awake, tries
to discover just why
she wants to leave him.

Carriage Clocks

I

She stooped to kiss Felicity,
fought the tears as she fumbled
with the wrapping. Folding back
the tissue paper, she gave its face
a long, cold stare, then held it up
for all the school to see.

"Thank you all so much. I shall miss
you children—the staff less so.
But, seriously, I shall think of you
all when I look at this on my mantelpiece
though I'm glad to say I shall not
be living to a time-table any more.
Twenty-three years here is enough
for any one. Thank you all again."

After the prayer, she put it in its box
for the last time, shutting out
the scrape of chairs on the hall floor
and the fading echo of small voices.

II

"And for productivity in 1988—Geoffrey Baldry."

She hangers the suit he bought for the presentation.
The bedroom is silent except for the quiet ticking.
She glances towards the dressing-table.
He is working very late again this evening.

III

They picked all the flesh from his services,
left his carcass to enjoy retirement. But first,
the collection. Then they ticked one off
in the typist's catalogue, from the cheapest range.

"H. Samuel. Only the best for the best.
They must have thought a lot of you",
said his wife, dusting again.

Doing one for yes and two for no since the stroke,
he nodded twice without shifting his stare
down the unkept garden to where a pigeon
was pecking, pecking at the bone-hard earth.

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Peter Porter

Village Explainer

The art of life is to be provincial;
to have sat in a plywood studio
for one's audition at the Quiz Kids'
Saturday Morning ambuscade,
to leave the shopping at the tram stop
but get home safely with the Cyclopaedia
of Submarines; to miss the wave of finches
in the wattle's volary because you wouldn't
lift your eye from Audubon.

This way the fiction of assertion starts
and all the trumpets of controversy.
See the baby in his cot lift two fingers
in rebuke or blessing—dare his mother tell him
he's not the Pope? The blessing started
with the Fall, a myth to leer at
in the canvas seats of matinées, shared with
stencils of delight and death. Your ministry?
Café pulpits, those long hours at dawn
when the confessional cup is passed
and Mahler on the gramophone
abrades the torn wistaria—to travel,
to win disciples and to be depressed.

And so to the Enlightenment.
There will not be a Panel or a Column
you can't grace, or Round Table where Reality
is more than the rotating Chairman.
The March Past of the Words is now
a daily trooping, Understanding
plays its miniature overture and
Self-Effacement looks into the glass.

Time makes even the autocue a blur
and this not uncourageous certainty
slides to after-dinner mumbling, the room
emptying to your anecdotes—back to
the comforting provincialism
of dying, and if brave enough your joy
at finding out what can't be known.
Lastly, a reasonably long obituary
in the paper where you got your start,
The Village Explainer, in which old friends
remember how you milked the words the tribe
entrusted to you and the way you held
them spellbound, putting to them what they were.

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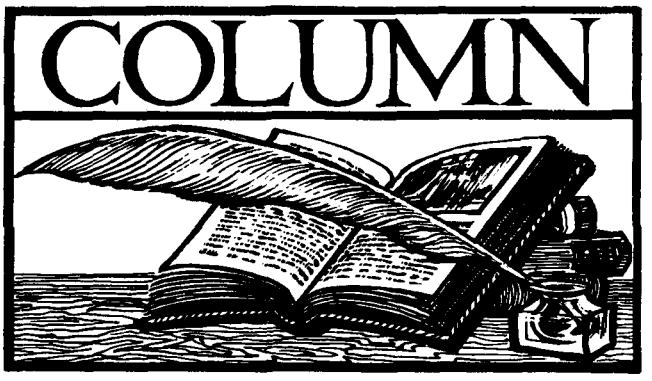

DURING Britain's long parched summer, walls in London began to be haunted by a sick mouth. Black and cavernous, it was fringed by a few gold or yellowing teeth. But this was no child or geriatric, croaking for "Water, water". In place of lips, the mouth had a high-tech steel-and-gold rim.

It was, of course, an optical illusion. Blink, look away, twitch a nerve—and the picture changed, like those crafty drawings that can be concave or convex, a crone or a young beauty, a vase or a kiss. Stare at the mouth for a moment, and the black cavern became solid, while the gold dissolved into a celestial background. What we had now was a shiny black badge—a stylised flying beetle with its wings outstretched.

Wrong again: but getting warmer. This was no beetle badge. As you've surely guessed by now, it was the logo for the film *Batman*. It can still be seen on T-shirts, at times with the sardonic caption "HYPE".

Batman in turn, of course, is a title which invites incomprehension from, say, elderly justices. "Am I to understand that this is a . . . motion picture?" "Yes, m'lud." "The story, I take it, of a soldier servant and his life with the officer he attends?"

Well, that could have been plausible. At one extreme, *Batman* might have been a stalwart Army film of Victorian values, all short hair and archaic accents, with the eponymous hero at first resenting his servility. "Get on with you, lad", says his bruised Irish mother: "Soldiering'll make a man of ye." It makes him, in fact, a feudal manservant, loyal unto death. In the final reel, *The Last Post* (or *Taps*) rings out his military funeral. He had given his life for his clean young master. We iris out on his Victoria Cross (or Purple Heart).

Alternatively, the batman could have been a coward, a spy, or a revolutionary, ending up as The Manacled (not Monocled) Mutineer. With a rock score (expensive) or Vivaldi (cheap) on the soundtrack, the film would spell out once more the stark staring madness of warfare, the evils of the caste system, the decadence of the middle classes, the depravity of British "public" schools. ("A stunning indictment"—*The Morning Star*.)

The real film *Batman*, needless to say, is neither of these things. Instead, it brings to big-screen life a juvenile fantasy which began in a comic-book 50 years ago, and has survived in a TV incarnation still being shown. Its hero, by day, is wealthy Bruce Wayne, traumatised as a child by seeing his parents murdered, and now dedicated to fighting crime. At night, therefore, he becomes Batman, the Caped Crusader, zapping the villains with his Batarang (cf. boomerang), his stun grenades, his lethal gauntlets, and his amazing vehicles—the armoured Batmobile (cf. Popemobile) and the near-supersonic Batwing (cf. Delta-wing).

As escapism goes, *Batman* is conservative. Superman, you may remember, had a wimpish *alter ego*, suggesting that any shy, spotty, bespectacled youth might be able to fly if only he could change his clothes in a telephone booth. His powers, like those of The Flash or Spiderman, were superhuman, with supernatural origins—flagged on the screen by flashing lights, whizzing galaxies, loud music, echo effects, and actors rigid as chessmen, intoning chants. Batman has no such metaphysics: he's just the boy next door in Olympic condition with gadgets the Pentagon might envy but couldn't afford. His wealth is his only mystery, since his parents were no Rockefellers; but that may make him still more satisfactory as wish-fulfilment. His wimpish admirers can transcend their status without looking for a kiosk: in this fantasy they're powerful already, with no intermediate probationary stage as the worm before it turns.

The makers of the *Batman* film have stuck fairly closely to the original comic-book iconography. "The way I rationalised the costumes", said Bob Ringwood, their designer, "is how the year 2000 would have looked if somebody in 1945 had imagined it." This is especially true of "Gotham City", the New-York-like setting, full of first generation skyscrapers and almost old cars, with men in long coats and fedoras, yet in other respects a futuristic nightmare. Anton Furst, the expert responsible, claims to have borrowed ideas from "the Chicago skyscraper architect Louis Sullivan, the Japanese architect Shin Takamatsu, Antonio Gaudi and Spanish Art Nouveau, Russian Constructivist design, and German Fascist architecture". The result has the crowded, fussy, pedantic look of painstaking cartoon detail smudgily reproduced on low-grade newsprint—a spidery festival of kitsch.

Batman himself, played by Michael Keaton, is a slight disappointment. In his Bruce Wayne persona, with black tie and dinner-jacket, he looks undistinguished, a youngster who's borrowed his father's togs. As the Caped Crusader, he's simply puddingy, the plastic visor stressing his plump jowls. Pretty Kim Basinger, the love interest, has far too little to do except be imperilled. But the real star of the film, as confirmed by the billing, is Jack Nicholson as the evil Joker—who must be cackling all the way to the bank.

NICHOLSON always strikes me as the kind of man I'd hate to meet in a poker game, let alone a liar-dice contest. "Rascal" is the one word for his screen personality, an old devil who might just be diabolical, a sometimes wheedling reprobate who can always play it rough. Trust him as far as you can shove him, but keep one hand on your wallet. Lock up your daughters, and preferably the whole family. Count the spoons—and don't forget the mashies and niblicks.

And yet of course he's a barrel of laughs. This, in *Batman*, is what makes his performance. The Joker, in the story, has had plastic surgery which imposes on him a clownlike grin. All clowns have a sinister side, unearthly, unpredictable,

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unsafe; and Nicholson simply pushes the paradox resolutely over the top. Winking, capering, mugging the camera, yet still pulsing with dynamic force, he has wicked fun with outrageous lines. One of the most telling is an exasperated question. "Can somebody tell me what kind of world we live in where a man dressed up as a bat gets all of my press?"

He might well ask. At the London celebrity press show, security was as tight as for a Presidential visit: police cordons, heaving crowds, heavy men in Bruce Wayne tuxedos. Serious adults, not all of them critics, sat respectfully watching their adolescent pabulum; serious critics, not all of them adults, afterwards debated the finer points of the Batman emblem. Don't think I'm knocking them: I was as absorbed as the rest. Yet I still marvel at the *Batman* phenomenon—not simply its phenomenal box-office earnings, but its appeal to people who otherwise think themselves grown-up.

Power-fantasy is its most obvious aspect. It fuels not only *Batman* and *Superman*, but also most of the cop series on film and television. *If only* the Caped Crusader, or Clark Kent, or Wonder Woman, or Columbo, or The Saint, or Dirty Harry were here in person, right now, we could forget the expensive alarm system, go out at night in the city centre, unlock the door of our tower-block apartment, leave the lidless car with the hood down—maybe even enjoy garbage-free streets. And if we ourselves were such unsuspected heroes (the superhumans disguised as mere mortals, Columbo looking an urban hayseed, the Saint supposedly a crook, and Dirty Harry apparently a renegade)—*then* we'd show that grungy colleague, that unappreciative family, that censorious boss. There's more to us all than meets the eye.

I suspect that there's also more to the continued appeal of comic-book heroes. Although as a child I used to draw an interminable, unpublishable strip cartoon gangster series, *The Black Hatters*, which I inflicted on my parents, I got little joy from its professional competitors after the age of about thirteen. I was surprised a few years later, when I met young American contemporaries then in their twenties, to find that many of them prized the cartoon series on the back page of the *Herald-Tribune*.

Not, admittedly, the high-drama stories, drawn with aggressive black lines and weird angles, with granite-jawed heroes and pneumatic-bosomed girls. These—Dick Tracy or Dr Kildare, say—were strictly for unintended laughs. But Al Capp was considered respectable, and Pogo (in those days) was an intellectual must. What a strange national culture, I thought. Even elderly Americans seemed to wear baseball caps, sneakers, and flowered Bermuda shorts; they relished nursery food like ice cream and hamburgers; and they wasted precious hours of their lifetime "reading" strip cartoons.

My British culture-snobbery soon took a pratfall. Today, the staidest of Britons, myself included, enjoys the fifth freedom—freedom from suits. Fast food has become universal. And Parisians, of all people, have embraced and intellectualised the strip cartoon.

Pessimists, resurrecting Spengler, might well see these as further proof of the decline of the West. "All social organizations, and the larger systems of which they are a part", says I. Robert Sinai in a recent challenging study,

> ". . . operate under a iron law of mortality. They die in the same way as biological organisms die. . . . One of the most powerful causes responsible for the breakdown of social systems is to be found in man's incapacity to handle power. . . . Sick and unbalanced, man is driven to assert himself through power over others. . . . The original drive for power is satiated only by complete self-devouring."[1]

If this were so, it could be argued that power-fantasies act as a safety-valve: that strip cartoons of shining pectorals and dazzling feats help preserve decorum and civilisation. Myself, I doubt both propositions. Vast numbers of people actually dislike power, which implies choice and vigilance; they prefer what some call "a good steady job" and others "a quiet life". And fantasies of power, in the wrong hands, can act as incitements to aggression rather than safety-valves. In any case, I think we must look elsewhere to explain the popularity of seemingly juvenile forms.

One very simple reason is nostalgia. As change grows more headlong and the world, on the whole, less prepossessing, *la mode rétro* has understandable appeal. There was a time, very recently, when every other film and TV programme seemed to feature Edwardian or earlier England, with Suffolk punches drawing hay-wains, wheat stooked in late-summer sunshine, and Delius or Elgar supplying the tunes. The same impulse made people recall with pleasure their childhood reading, clothing and food. So why not have a holiday? Revisit old haunts where characters talk in balloons and bubbles; relax in leisure-wear; relive the delights of the drugstore and the soda fountain. It's priggish to put away childish things.

And, anyway, who's giving the orders? One of the great social revolutions of our century has been the rise of the teenager. Economically a force in the market, adolescents have transformed several industries, notably in garments and discs. Jeans, sneakers, and rock music are the obvious examples. But the change involves also a huge shift in cultural prestige. In many respects, teenagers have become immensely more self-confident; and their elders are full of doubts. Adolescents always rebelled, but parents usually resisted. What's new, I suspect, is parents' sneaking desire to be teenagers too. At an age when pop music might be expected to have shown them its limits, they still hum old Beatles or Rolling Stone songs, and venture as far as Simon and Garfunkel in search of melodies that aren't too obviously square.

Marxists might ascribe it all to adolescent spending power; but to my mind it's a further instalment of the youth-snobbery already denounced by Wyndham Lewis in 1932 in *Doom of Youth*. Even he, I suspect, would have been startled to see rock music regularly reviewed in the serious newspapers, alongside concerts in the Royal Festival Hall. In his day, the equivalent would have been solemn critical attention to Paul Whiteman, Carroll Gibbons, and Roy Fox.

[1] I. Robert Sinai, *The Human Drama: Necessity and Chance* (Schenkman Books).

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Bored by stridency and thumping, in fact, some listeners to popular music are now timidly beginning to point out the virtues of 1930s dance bands and their wispy crooners. But when such music's revived, it usually comes with heavy camp winks and irony, pastiching the doo-wacka-doo and vo-de-o-do elements, just to make it clear to everyone that this is a lark.

MUCH THE SAME tactic is used in the strip cartoons. Their draughtsmen often seem to be playing games with the audience, exaggerating the dramatic perspective, the bulging biceps, the glaring eye. And in the movies the games are more explicit. In-jokes, quotations, flippant allusions to other films, extravagant villainy, and the ironical use of melodramatic cliché: all served to appease the adult viewer's self-criticism. They put him in the position, ostensibly absurd, of condescending to himself—or at least to his lower instincts. Enjoying the simple thrills and wish-fulfilment, he can at the same time congratulate himself on not being taken in. It sounds a contradictory stance: but all art depends on similar tensions between objective reality (sitting in a chair studying print, gazing at a screen, or watching actors) and the illusion that each activity seeks to create. Nor is there anything particularly eccentric in the contrast between enjoyment and self-reproach. It was George Santayana, after all, who wrote in *Platonism and the Spiritual Life* of "the delicious irony of despising the passions one is forced to share".

One further question nevertheless eludes an answer. Why is it that fantasies of the *Batman* type still seem to require apology? Folk tales and fairy stories—usually sealed with critical approval—involve most of the excesses, and little of the conscious irony, to be found in comic-book stories. You may argue that they have the worn polish of generations of sincere and simple story-tellers, while *Batman* is the collective product of sophisticated cynics out to make a buck. Perhaps so: but why then is *Batman* so popular? Can showmen really fool most of the people most of the time?

I personally doubt it. I suspect that the explanation lies not in *Batman* itself, and not even in the hype, but in the dearth of better competition. Too many artists, even in the cinema, seem to neglect the simple rules of narrative: begin with a "hook", establish characters in conflict, create suspense, spring surprises, reach a plausible resolution. Did I say "simple"? Forgive me. But when so few works respect such basic requirements, those that even begin to do so stand out. We're back, in fact, at optical illusions. *Batman*? Or a gaping void?

M

An Evening for John Constable

You, sky watcher,
knew well how every day
and every moment of the day
are fresh and unrepeatable.
Take this evening
in the last of August,
after a heavy shower.
A ship has anchored
off a rainbow
and high above the wind,
tufts of cirrus
rest quietly
in a field of mazarine.
The sun sinks.
Gulls yaw.
Across a pit of fire
swifts swerve south,
without a sound.
Far to the east
the afterlight honeys
a coast of clouds that calmly rise
to meet the whitening moon.
Under the wind's heel
the sea heaves high
in bottled fury;
grins like a shark along the shingle,
sloshes over.
Now it is almost dark.
Look up, John, at the first ladder
of bright stars.

Bryn Gunnell

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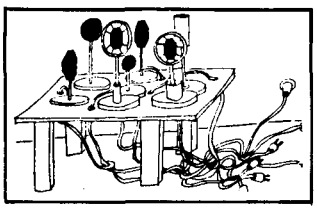
NOTES & TOPICS

The Paradox of Truth-Telling

East & West between Propaganda & Reality—By GEORGE URBAN



GLASNOST is having some intriguing side-effects. The first casualty was Soviet propaganda, the second the Soviet and East European peoples' image of the Western world. I shed no tears for the first, I shed half a tear for the second.

By the time Mikhail Gorbachov launched his reform programme, Communist information policy had lost all credibility. Official utterances were so poorly regarded that it had become conventional wisdom for the reverse of whatever was stated to be believed as the most likely truth; and it came to be said of the truly incorrigible Warsaw liar that "even the opposite of what he claims cannot be trusted". But mendacity so transparently deployed had its uses; it offered a grotesque but serviceable key to government thinking and to the outside world. *Glasnost* has now begun to undermine all that; the full truth is still not on offer, but the lie-detector, too, has come under suspicion.

In Poland, Hungary, and the trail-blazing Baltic Republics of the Soviet Union, truth-mongering has brought relief but also bewilderment. The man on the Budapest omnibus finds it perplexing that images of a crime-ridden New York City, a slummy Glasgow or a racist France can no longer be ascribed to Communist propaganda alone; authentic evidence that these exist now reaches him from American, British and French sources unhindered by interference. "If", he wonders, "the Communists have been telling us some of the truth about New York and Glasgow, might they not have been telling us some of the truth about other things, too? If government duplicity can no longer be relied on, how do we find our bearings in the bewildering world of 'neither-truth-nor-open-mendacity'?"

These are difficult questions both for public opinion in the Communist countries and for the Western communicator. Under Stalin and Brezhnev, the image of a rich, equitable and "cultured" West became a psychological counter weight to repression and poverty. "Over there", it was said, stands the Celestial City to which those sentenced to live under socialist squalor can aspire and from which they can draw hope. "Over there" were the legatees of dormant traditions and the guarantors of return to a dignified national existence.

But this reassuring although warped vision of the world outside the socialist universe cannot be attributed entirely to a sorely tried public's reaction to Communist mendacity. There is another factor, just as important.

Before *glasnost* arrived on the scene, most of the reliable information the East European and Soviet citizen could glean about the rest of the world (and frequently about his own country) reached him through the airwaves of Western broadcasting stations such as the Voice of America, the BBC, Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, *Deutsche Welle*, and others. These were, for the most part, institutions founded and supervised by men and women of the cultural élite and replenished with successors of similar learning and sensibility. Many became writers and politicians of distinction, and came to occupy leading positions in national governments and international organisations. They were, in other words, rather unrepresentative of the state of American, British or French civilisation as we encounter it in our daily lives, but were immensely effective—and perhaps for that reason—as international broadcasters. For the appeal of "high culture" in Eastern Europe has always reached beyond the cultured classes. Even under "the dictatorship of the proletariat", assimilation of the higher reaches of culture has been a mark of *bon ton* and a prerequisite of acceptance as a serious member of the national community.

IT WAS NOT that our Western cultural élites conspired to monopolise the antennae of their respective countries on behalf of cultural values which they could no longer adequately assert in their own domestic environment. It was, rather, that international broadcasting was an inherently élitist activity. Foreign broadcasters had to be linguists familiar with the history and thinking of the countries they addressed. That alone would have made them untypical. But they were also heirs to the ethos and scholarship of the founders and high priests of committed radio such as John

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Reith, Robert Bruce Lockhart, Alexander Lieven, Hugh Carleton Green, Gerard Mansell and Martin Esslin in Britain; and William Griffith, Herbert Ritvo and Richard Burks in the United States. The tastes and values of these men stemmed from the seminar rooms of Oxford and Cambridge, and the Ivy League universities. Broadcasting for them had little in common with popular journalism, and nothing at all with the entertainment industry.

Moreover, by implication, élitism received institutional backing. The statutory obligations of foreign broadcasting were, in the main, in harmony with the inclinations of the programme-makers. Whether they spoke on behalf of a national "power base"—as the BBC and VOA—or identified themselves, as surrogate domestic stations, with the nations they addressed, Western international broadcasting corporations stressed (and still stress) accuracy, balance, seriousness, respect of privacy, and universal moral responsibility as their guiding principles. Not many of our newspapers would or could go along with so stringent a code of behaviour. These were high standards to aim for and were

Towards "An Era of Cultural Vacuity"?

LET US TAKE *as read the eventual reconversion of totalitarian societies to democracy (an enormous but not implausible assumption) and have faith in capitalist economics to devise ever new ways of spreading wealth. It is then that larger questions loom: questions which take us back to cultural and moral thinkers such as Kant and Carlyle, Eliot and Ortega y Gasset, rather than simply to Hegel. Once the problem has ceased to be merely mechanical—the techniques of democracy or the management of production—another little matter arises: What is it all for?*

DOES LIBERAL DEMOCRACY **amount in effect to no more than the counting of heads or of cash? Kant insisted that there could be no true progress that was not moral in nature; that peace depended on democracy; and that democracy was meaningless without a highly educated and informed public. Thomas Carlyle scoffed at "Midas-eared Mammonism", Eliot fretted about the decline of culture in modern Western society and, already in the '30s, Ortega y Gasset foresaw with alarming precision the domination of "Mass Man".**

TO ANYONE CONCERNED *with the moral or cultural instability of the West, the bankruptcy of Comunism is scant consolation. The difficulty was nicely anticipated in a Russian joke I heard in Moscow many years ago:*

> **"I don't understand", a Soviet listener wrote to the radio. "One day you tell us that the West is teetering on the brink of a precipice. The next day you say we are determined to overtake them . . . ."**

NOW THAT *the smoke of the East-West conflict is lifting, we shall be able to take a closer look at ourselves. Is it possible that our natural propensity to compare our societies to backward and repressive régimes has given us too high a regard for ourselves? The comparison should surely be not with the other fellow's deformities but with our own potentialities. In a post-Communist future, it will no longer be sufficient to tell ourselves that at least we are not like them.*

WE LIKE TO THINK **that ours is a triumph of ideas when, in reality, it is a more modest and more material achievement. What we are seeing today is not a moral rebirth of nations, but the victory of the managerial ethic: the Second Coming of Adam Smith. For obvious material and technological reasons, Communist societies are trying to claw their way on to the bandwagon. They are not reforming themselves from above because Communism is wrong but simply because it does not work.**

ALL OF WHICH *has interesting implications for the future. Which is more plausible: the emergence of a new, model democratic man or Spengler's vision of*

> **". . . a new sort of nomad, cohering unstably in fluid masses, the parasitical city-dweller, traditionless, utterly matter of fact, religionless, clever, unfruitful, deeply contemptuous of the countryman . . . ."**

The point about nomads is the mobility of their tents. From Minsk to Inner Mongolia, we may expect new recruits to our wandering tribe. Naturally, we shall give them every succour: satellite TV to illuminate their lives, with Andy Warhol self-portraits to give them inner meaning.

Come the day, popular fêting of the final demise of totalitarianism and the triumph of liberal democracy—should it come about—may prove surprisingly muted. Orgies there may be, but no orgy of celebration. Drugs (suggestively, one of the earliest utopias went by the name of "Cockaigne"), the environment, keeping ageing societies amused and unmugged in an era of cultural vacuity—one way and another, there could be other things on people's minds.

IN THE MIDDLE **of the last War, Thomas Mann lectured in America about "the Coming Victory of Democracy". It would prevail, he said, only if democracy preserved a "deep and forceful recollection of itself" and if it "constantly renewed its spiritual and moral self-consciousness".**

We can hardly be said to have done that. How can we learn from the past if we do not teach it? My own contribution was entitled, with intended irony, "Peaceful Co-Amnesia: An Alternative Route to Oblivion?"[1]

THE FACT THAT *Communist régimes are embarking on a long and perilous journey to democracy at the very moment when we ourselves are losing touch with its most profound roots, and when our materialistic societies are afflicted with scourges that our former adversaries can expect to inherit, is an explosive irony. And if the global reformation turns out to be more managerial than moral, what guarantee will there be of perpetual peace?*

George Walden
in the DAILY TELEGRAPH

[1] George Walden's article "Peaceful Co-Amnesia" was published in ENCOUNTER, July–August 1989.

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not always attained, but the legacy they left behind was none the less remarkable. I have heard opinion-making Poles and Hungarians assert that the current upheavals in their countries would have been "far less peaceful" and internationally manageable had not some of the Western broadcasting organisations, notably Radio Free Europe, set out a decade or two ago to articulate the national debate for radical change and independence in an *evolutionary* rather than a revolutionary framework.

Leadership by a self-confident broadcasting élite was, of course, not to everyone's taste. From time to time attempts were made to "lower the brow" of foreign broadcasting and bring it closer to the style of domestic entertainment; and the argument that the airwave voices of the US, Britain, and Germany should be more in tune with the current tone of their own national cultures (that is, of low or negative culture) is still with us. The pressures for homogenisation—from the Radical Left because it abhors élitism, from certain sections of the Right because they are too uneducated to know better—were powerful but they were usually resisted. Sophisticated perceptions survived under the protective shield of accuracy and of balance.

WHAT EMERGED at the receiving end of this contemporary exercise in Reithian ethos was an image of the Western world that was accurate enough but larger than life. It did not hide our Western shortcomings; it painted them in as blots on an otherwise rather magisterial canvas. But the public in the USSR and Eastern Europe had lofty aspirations. They were hoping, somewhere down the road, to become a free, fair, democratic and compassionate society imbued with a sense of spiritual culture; and this was precisely the picture of Western society which most of our broadcasting organisations held up to them.

That this made the average East European a marginally better as well as a more thoughtful human being is attested by evidence. And there was, indeed, room for improvement, for the moral depredations of Communist rule were second only to its devastation of living standards. Demand for regeneration on Christian and Humanist-secular lines alike was strong and continuous. Proffering certain symbols from Western life and culture as examples to contemplate may have been an egregious conceit, but many of them fell on receptive ears and were rapidly absorbed.

This hopeful image of a noble West is, I sense, now beginning to fade. *Glasnost* has ushered in a whole set of new factors. The speedy reforms in Poland and Hungary, satellite television, unjammed broadcasting, and the almost free flow of people and ideas have, while further underlining the backwardness of the Communist economies, destroyed some cherished beliefs about Western society. The ugliness of British football hooliganism and the widespread use of narcotics in the US Army have been brought into every East European home—and not by Communist television alone. So have the bumbling ignorance of many of our politicians and the intellectual unpreparedness of some of our foreign ministries. Western democracies do, of course, withstand the hazards of openness infinitely better than Communist régimes. But, for the East European public, blemishes on an idealised face are more difficult to come to terms with than the failures of an expiring system from which nothing but expiration is now anticipated.

Disappointment on a national scale can have far-reaching repercussions. Eastern Europe has not, as yet, reached that stage, but some of the symptoms are worth a fleeting glance. Under the aegis of their newly-won freedom, some of the East-Central European state-controlled television stations have taken to airing large chunks of Western "Pop-Culture"—on the argument that they cannot be left behind in the race for modernity, fashion, and audience-ratings. Rubbish always has an audience—and it has one in Eastern Europe. But the more thoughtful members of the East-Central European intelligentsia are appalled by what they see and hear, and do not hesitate to say so.

Their first reaction was disbelief that the sleazy junk culture of the West is quite so pervasive and bestrides our world with so little shame. Is this what all those broadcasts by and about Dylan Thomas, Ignazio Silone, Arnold Toynbee, H. L. Mencken, Carl Orff or Denis de Rougemont were all about? Their second reaction was, and is, to call for a stringent return to the roots of their own national traditions and for the reintegration of these artificially severed cultures into the mainstream of modern European thinking and being.

Their third reaction, as I have encountered it, was puzzlement at the strength and apparent aimlessness of Western materialism. That the theory and practice of Communist materialism had a corrupting impact on national character (and that it must be opposed) had long been clear to them. But they were unprepared for the discovery that the materialism that drives the competitive Western economies can produce wealth without well-being and without some search for a higher fulfilment. This strikes them as shocking. Can comfortable citizens "over there", they ask, actually choose to put themselves on horror-movie rations, wall-to-wall *Dallas*, and round-the-clock sex from Copenhagen and Milan? I did not dare to answer that question.

THE MEN and women who articulate such sentiments are not the Eastern counterparts of the West's guilt-ridden disarmers and effete intellectuals. They command respect and authority because they are the traditional keepers of "national consciousness" and of the national conscience. In the 19th century as well as in our own, they formulated in Central Europe the case for freedom and national independence, and stood on the barricades again and again when shots had to be fired in anger.

And when they tell us that the cultural junk that reaches them from our shores in the name of intellectual liberty is alien to their being and a threat to their idea of national reconstruction, can we afford not to take them seriously? Is it not just possible that, after the tribulations of half-a-century, they have come closer to the possession of some key to a worthier human existence than we? It would be a melancholy irony if their eagerness to achieve Western living standards landed them in the spiritual vacuum we have created for ourselves.

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Paint Killers

By Richard Middleton

WAR GAMES are sweeping Britain. Hundreds of civilians dress in full combat gear daily to shoot one another for fun. Armed with air pistols, they invade the countryside firing pellets filled with coloured dye. Although participants are "zapped" by the paint, no one is seriously hurt. The activity has become a cult sport and parish councils are continually dealing with planning applications for new battle-sites. But why do fit young men and women give up their spare time to "kill" each other? Is it merely a sense of adventure or something more sinister? Supporters say the game develops lateral thinking skills, useful in business and the hostile jungle of everyday life. Critics suspect it teaches players how to be aggressive without actually going to war.

A New York stockbroker, Hayes Noel, is widely credited with inventing war games. He is said to have bet two ex-Army friends that he could deal with any "war zone" environment after surviving the cut and thrust of Wall Street. They took him up on the wager and the seeds of war games were sown. It was first played in June 1981, in woodland upstate New York, using as weapons paint-guns normally used to mark livestock. The participants played just one game, and battle raged all day. Hayes Noel lost his bet but the idea lived on. A company, National Survival Game Inc., was founded and franchises began to be sold worldwide. The game was first played in the UK in March 1984. Now, weekly "paintball" magazines feature gun tests, visits to battle-sites, and league results, while wives write in complaining about the time and money their families spend on the new craze.

I was first persuaded to "play" in 12 acres of woodland near Lingfield in Surrey, about 40 miles from London. The aim is simply to shoot anyone who tries to capture your team's flag. Shots to the head do not count. Coloured armbands are worn to identify each team and each game lasts about 40 minutes. Beginners are killed rapidly and, as I discovered, it is quite painful to be zapped at close range. "Dead" players must surrender, pistols held above shoulder level. They either watch the end of the game from strategic vantage points or retire to base camp. There, safety rules allow players to remove protective perspex goggles. Eventually the winner is declared. Players rub off the tell-tale (biodegradable) stains from their clothes with wet sponges, restock with ammunition and refill on gas or compressed air to power their pistols. A new game begins.

Do not be in doubt. This "Cowboys and Indians" for adults is exciting. You find yourself adopting absurd positions, hiding behind trees, squinting round bushes. The game becomes more enjoyable as you learn to handle the gun and aim to save ammunition. Senses strain to detect the enemy's movements. It is amusing to shoot another player but not so funny to be "blotted" yourself. Quite often players get separated, each seeking cover from enemy fire. Alone, one is constantly on the look-out, nerves twitching. There is no real fear, however, because there is no *real* enemy. There are only problems of strategy to be solved.

I played on the Red team—a mixture of London surveyors and their friends—and we won convincingly, seven games to four. Tactics were discussed furiously before each game. There seemed to be many captains, although individual heroics were generally discouraged. Group leaders were selected to head advance parties while the main company followed behind. At the whistle blast which signalled the start of each game, quasi-military commands cut through the air. "Give me cover, I'm going to make a run for it", or "Look out. There're two behind the trees on the left". Keen players become quite serious. I congratulated one player on capturing the enemy's flag and he looked quite offended, as though it were somehow improper to applaud a soldier's courage. Appeals on "hits" were made to judges who wore brightly-coloured jackets and carried walkie-talkies. In the heat of battle, they said, combatants have been known to come to blows.

THE BARBECUE which followed "the battle" was reminiscent of *M*A*S*H*—queues for food, canvas awnings, benches and banter. One player who had a penchant for hurling smoke-grenades—at an extra £3 a throw—brought his own champagne. A 36-year-old engineer who had played before spoke proudly about a bridge assault; he had lain undetected for ages and then "splattered" about five Blue players all at once. He said the game taught him to think quickly. It helped his self-confidence in dealing with people. At another table a novice player, who earned £35,000 a year in the City, said that, like playing the stock-market, "paintballing" brought out people's animal nature; those with the most cunning won. An 18-year-old clerk, who ate his lunch standing up, said the game gave him a chance to get his own back on the "guv'nor". His friend, who claimed four "kills" in two games, said: "We live in such a controlled society. War games are just an opportunity to let everything go and shoot people. I get very stressed working in a bank and this is a chance to let it all out." A blonde girl, who was an extremely good shot and was always being picked for the advance parties, had played the game five times before. Indeed, it is claimed that many women who play regularly are just as good, if not better, than men. However, a solicitor's clerk I met made players surrender because the pellets hurt too much. "I avoid shooting people if I can", she said. "Once I made five players surrender because I know how much it hurts to get shot."

Setting up battle-sites in the UK appealed to recession-hit farmers and landowners. They have found that un-economic woodland can be made to pay for itself. Many also found the

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game attractive, having enjoyed the "pleasures" of the Combined Cadet Force at public school. Initially, an advertising campaign was aimed at the corporate sector. The first players were business and financial executives. Now the appeal has spread across the social spectrum. Bankers mix with labourers, solicitors with car mechanics. Battle-sites are concentrated in the south, and applications for new ones are a constant headache for planning authorities. Recently there have been calls for tighter controls on the "War Games Syndrome" after it was discovered that ancient woodland in Essex had suffered severe ecological damage through too much use.

British organisers claim to run the cleanest games. "Blotted" participants in America, they say, are frequently zapped ten times over to prevent cheats rubbing the dye off clothes. Hayes Noel accepts this: "The British are much more straightforward than the Americans. They don't play to win at all costs." Combatants in the UK are mostly forbidden to use their own weapons, whereas players in the States often brandish splattering machine-guns. A Pitman SMG 60 will fire at the rate of 600 pellets a minute. In both countries no expense is spared to achieve a realistic war scenario. Mortars lob canisters of paint. There are even paint-firing tanks and field guns. The "dead" are ferried back to base by helicopter.

War games as corporate entertainment is the biggest growing sector within the market. Organisers claim a 92% return rate by first-time players. Recently, one company took over the island of Herm in the Channel Islands so its top executives could "paintball" in a massive 320 acres. Firms use war games to entertain clients or even to promote a new product. Kit Peters, who has been running corporate war games in the UK for more than five years, says people take it up for fun only to discover that it does teach survival skills useful in the boardroom, on the stock-market floor, even on the building-site. He denies that the game encourages players to seek out their killer instinct, but suggests that it allows people to let off pent-up aggression. Moreover, Kit Peters feels that war games are a novel form of self-identification. "It is a sexual experience . . . people discover themselves through physical contact with the great outdoors."

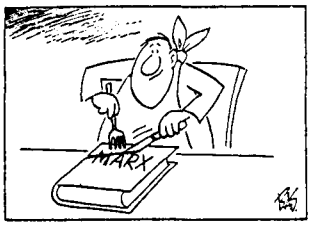
War games are based on a concept as old as man: only the toughest and fittest survive. People participate to boost confidence, to bring the language of battle to bear on their everyday lives. The thrill of victory at war games is perhaps the same as success in life. Players think that if they can win on the battlefield it will help them secure an important contract, out-manoeuvre a bad-tempered foreman, even begin a love affair. War games purport to give players the clear-sightedness of a solider with a mission. They encourage achievement of goals without self-doubt and slipshod procrastination. When there is no real war to fight, young men and women seek to learn leadership qualities through other means. In peacetime, it would seem that people need the excitement of an ersatz war to help run their lives.

It is possible to imagine Margaret Thatcher leading a bedraggled Cabinet through the undergrowth during a daring war-game assault. No doubt she would make an excellent job of it too. How far, though, could paintballers be relied on to fight in real combat? Participants think long and hard about their experiences and often reject the brutish instinct they have discovered within themselves. The conclusion many reach is that they would not really want to kill the enemy. Yet the recklessness displayed in today's games, where failure does not mean death, indicates that there is still much paint to be spilled.

Paris Notebook

By Jean-François Revel

Marxism from a Proper Distance



Leszek Kolakowski is, of course, the Polish philosopher who lives in Oxford. Of his previous works written in Polish the extraordinary *Chrétiens sans Eglise (Christians without a Church)* was translated into French and published by Gallimard in 1969; nowadays he usually writes and expresses himself in English, though I know that he also uses French on occasion.

Kolakowski is one of the greatest historians of ideas working today. The depth of his research, his capacity for organising information, and the meticulous way in which he examines his texts are equalled only by the clarity and sureness of synthesis with which he simplifies, identifies, and recovers what is authentic and essential. Moreover, his interpretations have one merit well worth mentioning in passing: they are precise.

Kolakowski's *Main Currents of Marxism*,[1] the three volumes of which run to some 2,000 pages, is the first not to have been itself a part of Marxism. I mean that it is the first to recount, analyse, reconstruct, expound, and elucidate Marxism as any historian of philosophy would do for Neo-Platonism or for the pre-Socratic Greek thinkers. Until now, everything original that has been written (I am not talking about the more or less scholarly summaries, most of which are very "approximate") has seen itself as "continuing" or even "renewing" Marxism—or else it has attacked it, refuted it, or "superseded" it.

[1] *Histoire du Marxisme*. By Leszek Kolakowski. Vol. 1, *Les fondateurs: Marx, Engels, et leurs prédécesseurs*; Vol. 2, *L'Age d'or: de Kautsky à Lénine*. In English: *Main Currents of Marxism: Its Rise, Growth, and Dissolution*. Vol. 1, *The Founders*; Vol. 2, *The Golden Age*; Vol. 3, *The Breakdown* (Oxford University Press, 1981).

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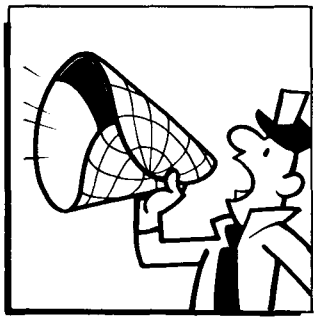
Kolakowski has put an end to all that. At last we have a historian who no longer seeks by whatever slant to be the reviser, the reformer, the continuer, the new Messiah, or the destroyer of the school of thought with which he is dealing. Why should Marx, together with his predecessors, companions, heirs, and opponents, not come in for the same sort of objective historical treatment that we unhesitatingly bestow on every other tribulation of the human mind? The great 19th-century historian Jules Michelet once began a lecture at the Collège de France with the words "*Messieurs, l'Angleterre est une île*"; Kolakowski opens his work thus: "Karl Marx was a German philosopher." It is high time we remembered that and discussed him as such.

I can do no more in this brief note than register an important event: the appearance in French of the first two volumes of this historical study. It needs now, after its Polish underground edition gave a certain intellectual sovereignty to *Solidarity* dissidence, to be translated into Russian with all speed. But will Gorbachov's *glasnost* stand the test of such philosophical openness? Even a *samizdat* edition will serve the *perestroika* of ossified Soviet ideology.

Render Unto History . . .



THE REBELLION of the Chinese has given a fillip to one of our favourite intellectual pastimes: drawing historical comparisons.

President Mitterrand sees China through bicentennial spectacles. The Chinese in 1989, he said in Montreal, equal the French in 1789. Rather hard on the French 18th century! To compare the *dix-huitième* to the dark tunnel of the Maoist period, when two operas by Mao's wife and the drivel of *The Little Red Book* constituted the sum total of Chinese culture, is not exactly to do it justice. Where are the Watteaus, the Fragonards, the Montesquieus, the Voltaires of the Maoist years? Maoism was an era of cultural and social desertification.

Others have likened Beijing '89 to May '68. Again, no comparison. The societies of the 1960s were the most democratic and the most affluent that mankind have ever known. The May '68 rebellion was fathered by freedom and prosperity. The rupture occurred because the evolution of manners had failed to keep pace with the evolution of structures. It was the opposite of a rebellion against a totalitarian system. Its protagonists took themselves for disciples of Mao. However, like Christopher Columbus thinking he had discovered China, what they too were really discovering was America—the source, for them, of "the wind of revolution".

In a further false comparison, there was talk of "the Beijing Commune". Born of the humiliation of defeat by Prussia and of the Parisian working-class tradition of the "*journées*" of July 1830, the French Commune set its sights (oddly enough) not against the Empire, which had already been overthrown, but against the Republic which had been proclaimed on 4 September 1870 and the National Assembly elected in February of the following year. The rest of France, not understanding the *communards*, was afraid of them. Isolated, they were slaughtered in their thousands during the hideous massacres of 21–28 May 1871, "the week of blood". One day the file on this episode of French history is going to have to be opened. Meanwhile, it seemed a curious way of rooting for the Beijing students to liken them to the unfortunate *communards*.

The totalitarian dictatorships of Communism are a totally new historical phenomenon. They must be studied in their own terms. We have no precedents that might help us to understand them.

And even less to understand what may come after them. Indeed, one of the fundamental characteristics of such régimes is to work, from the very moment they are put in place, towards eradicating all forces capable of ousting them. In the cases of the Greek colonels, Franco, Salazar, Louis XIV, Napoleon, Mussolini, Hitler, and Marcos—not to mention the crises experienced by the democracies, too—there were alternative solutions to hand.

With Communist régimes there are not. Communist régimes have always been at great pains to destroy the very possibility of alternative solutions. It is now clear that such régimes no longer work at all. But it is equally clear that they have no exit route planned and are having no success in cobbling one together. That goes particularly for the two dinosaurs of the Communist world and their counterparts in the Third World. Tentative solutions are beginning to emerge in Poland and Hungary, where totalitarianism had not destroyed everything.

Nevertheless, up until now (with all due respect to those who mistake the illness for the cure) no process of total substition of a democratic régime for a Communist régime has yet run its full course. My belief and hope is that one day that will happen. But how? All we can do is note that such systems are currently jolted by convulsions and appear to be in their death throes. How ironic that the promulgators of so many Plans have no plan of retreat. They find themselves, like the rest of us, face to face with the unknown. It is that unknown that we must now learn to imagine.

J.-F.R.

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A Special Book Section

Politics & World Affairs

Colonel Isobé's Secret

The Japanese Formula—By SYDNEY GIFFARD

THE LAST TIME I met Colonel Isobé, perhaps twenty years ago, he seemed just as jaunty as he had twenty years before that, in those otherwise drab, early post-War Tokyo days. As jaunty, that is, as he had always seemed on arrival for a working session. After twenty minutes or so, he had had a tendency to drift into sleep, to be woken immediately by the crash of *First Lessons in Japanese* as the book fell from his lap on to the study floor. When this happened, he had always returned, without any explanation, to the beginning of the lesson which we had been attacking. This gave one the opportunity to repeat faultlessly what had been rehearsed so very recently, before the momentary interruption. Such opportunities were one's best hope of earning commendation.

To be sprightly, yet to succumb easily to sleep, was a natural combination in those days, for a gentleman long retired but obliged to make his way through the giant, rattling skeletons of Tokyo and Yokohama, to attend to his students. They were indeed trying times for the elderly, but a smile over some difficulty encountered by his wife was the nearest Colonel Isobé ever came to a complaint. And sprightliness was his usual mode, rather than weariness. He was quicker to spring from his chair and move to stand under the door lintel, whenever there was an earth-tremor, than most of his young pupils. He contrived, without a word, to convey the idea that it was everyone's duty to move sharply into position to withstand any shock which might occur. There was no question of false politeness over seniority or precedence: it was a matter of battle-drill.

I believe that Colonel Isobé never discussed World War II, its causes, its course, or its consequences, with his students, unless strictly in the context, say, of an editorial or item of news under study. Preference for avoiding the subject was perhaps partly why the career of his son had limited value only, for conversational purposes. Colonel Isobé's own direct experience of active hostilities—occasionally recalled to illustrate briefly some general thesis about the Meiji period—had been of the fighting round Port Arthur in 1904, his rank at that time perhaps Lieutenant, probably in the Imperial Guards. Later, there had been liaison with the British Army, and the gradual establishment of a connection with language students from the British government service and from industry.

This connection had served as a bridge into retirement, and now far beyond. His success as a teacher was based firmly on his refusal to cultivate, certainly to display, any knowledge of the English language beyond what might be necessary in order to arrange the time and place with a beginner, for the initiation of a course of study of uncertain duration.

We never learned his age. He did once disclose to me, with a kind of parade-ground giggle which was one of his characteristic expressions, that the practice adopted in disrespect of unpopular contemporaries, in the days when he was an officer cadet, had been to cut off their top-knots. This might have been the equivalent of de-bagging in the British social lexicon of some period not so long before our own time, or of setting fire to the shirt-tails where a future Field Marshal was engaged in the business. But it might be wrong to draw conclusions as to Colonel Isobé's age from the consideration that the style of hairdressing which involved top-knots was made illegal in Japan in 1871.

AT THE TIME of my tutorials with him, Colonel Isobé regarded a student as being ready for whatever examination might be deemed a suitable substitute for a passing-out parade as soon as he could enunciate with confidence the Japanese phrases for hydro-electric power *(suiryoku denki)* and what we should now call inward capital investment (*tōshi dōnyū*). Many years afterwards, still haunted by these phrases, I came to see that they were the names of the two things in all the world most needed by Japan at the time of the Occupation; energy, and funds, for the new take-off.

The current catchphrase has retained its extraordinary influence in Japanese society. It is therefore appropriate that

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it should be given its due share of attention by scholars. Japanese is something of a circus performer among languages. Its repertoire of tricks, including so many that are visual, such subtle optical echoes and allusions, is beyond black belt mastery even to most of those born to and schooled in it. Brian Moeran has tackled it recently from its street-wise end, looking as it were at the buskers, the break-dancers of the language, in the Yoyogi Park of cosmopolitan, instant culture; and along the Omote Sandō of youthful, vernacular chic. An enviable combination of lightness of heart with seriousness of purpose is the distinct and distinguished character of *Language and Popular Culture in Japan.*[1]

Professor Moeran betrays some concern lest what he describes as his semi-linguapological approach might prove incompatible with the traditions of scholarship and dignity. In truth, it may rather seem that he has succeeded in bringing the brick and the mortar-board together again. Some of his language would be acceptable on a building site, too, and is not to be despised for that. Some of it is jargon, and that is another matter. But even here he is not to be held responsible for what others have done with the literary heritage of the social sciences. In good substance, he offers insights of originality and bright merit, much simple entertainment, and a modicum of academic disputation. His chapter on the aesthetics of folk crafts (*mingei*), based on his residence among the potters of Sarayama, while it also covers an important episode in the history of modern Japanese art, includes an especially perceptive account of the impact of marketing skills on an artless community, and on their innocent craft. His piece on the poetics of advertising prises further open the door to a rich storehouse of fantasy, wit and degradation. He knows, as well, where pornography begins and ends, and possibly why.

ONE OF Professor Moeran's most helpful achievements is to introduce the reader gently to a network of controversy which is undeniably close to the centre of the attention of students of Japan today. This has to do with *nihonjinron* (discussion of the Japanese, and whether they are simply or uniquely unique) and with the related question of whether it is more useful to study Japanese society primarily in its own terms, or more extensively by methods which rely on comparisons with other societies. The same questions apply to Japanese culture, or cultures, as to the society, if indeed you know how to separate them.

Not everyone finds it easy to read about these problems. But no one communicates the enjoyment which they can offer more infectiously than Professor Moeran. If this enjoyment is more readily accessible to those familiar with the general nature, at least, of the Japanese language, we must be careful not to hold this against him. He is right to stress the great power and influence of the language, which is not to say that it is a language specially designed for the painless communication of abstract thought. He is also right to remind us of the dangers of a certain precious exclusiveness, which used sometimes to infest oriental studies, even if in doing so he ends an admirably deft symphony with a coda trembling on the near edge of portentousness.

TODAY'S SOCIAL SCIENTISTS seem determined to avoid the error attributed by Professor Moeran to yesterday's orientalists. Judged by *Constructs for Understanding Japan*, the published proceedings If the International Colloquium of the Comparative Study of Japanese Society held at Noosa Heads, Queensland, early in 1982,[2] they have called in question every popular explanation of Japan's 'post-War success which has resulted from the researches of near-experts, and a good deal of holy writ deriving from more venerable sources.

This book pitches the reader into the thorniest thickets which surround the controversies so brilliantly skated over by Professor Moeran. Their surface turns out not to have been thin, as in the proverb, but so solid as to require the use of the kind of heavy ice-breaker more proper to Sovietologists navigating during the Cold War. It is well worth sending for one of these painstaking vessels, and settling down to a voyage of rare and exotic beauty, if indeed you can bring yourself to look out across the great tundra of jargon. Precious riches lie below the permafrost of these forbidding pages. The editors contribute an introduction (which has the merit of speaking clearly against everything which they might wish to label too Westernly ethnocentric) and an ominously labelled paper on social classes in Japan ("A Multi-dimensional View of Stratification: A Framework for Comparative Analysis"). It is devoutly to be hoped that readers will not let themselves be repelled by this or other awesome titles and phrases. The editor-authors are out to demonstrate, in their latter paper, that the common belief that 90% of the Japanese people are content to regard themselves as belonging to the middle class is at best a gross oversimplification and at worst a travesty: and they are surely right.

Other papers in this tough-looking, terrifyingly named, squat book score massively against a team of other overweight misconceptions and clumsy generalisations. It is proposed in these papers, for example, that individual self-interest is not lacking in supposedly group-oriented Japan; that groups themselves, or circles or arcs, where they exist, are not simple, hierarchical structures; that conjugal and other family relationships are not set in some indestructible Japanese mould; that notions of the wider society are flexible; that the deprived may be learning how to stand up for their putative rights; that parliamentary democracy has a certain validity in Japan; that industrial relations there may resemble features of those in other industrialised countries more closely than has usually been assumed; and so on. Such propositions are refreshing, and for the most part the arguments are persuasively presented.

The jargon, heralded by the title, remains. The expression "white-collarization" may stand as representative of a pervasive character which might drive honest readers, even potential enthusiasts, clean away. Yet the concept of the "white-

[1] *Language and Popular Culture in Japan.* By BRIAN MOERAN. Manchester University Press, £29.95.

[2] *Constructs for Understanding Japan.* Edited by YOSHIO SUGIMOTO and ROSS E. MOUER. Kegan Paul International, £45.00.

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collarization" of workers in Japanese industry proves to be of very considerable interest. When the jargon is applied to aspects of methodology, rather than of Japanese society, we may sense a threat of hypothermia. Yet this reader, for one untutored example, found Professor Befu's paper on "The *Emic-Etic* Distinction and Its Significance for Japanese Studies" entirely lucid, highly enjoyable, and notably wise in its conclusions. Professor Neustupný and his typologies speak more emphatically for the benefit of those further up or down the learning curve, whichever it may be (along, perhaps; even round). All the more desirable to avoid leaving the suspicion that this book may be a case of the unreadable in pursuit of the inscrutable. It makes a number of unmistakably valuable contributions to Japanese studies, and asks some fundamental questions about the nature of these studies and about our approach to a complex of relationships on whose development our future must in some measure depend.

IF IT IS GOOD to see revisionists at work on established preconceptions of Japan, one must also be prepared to meet new explanations of the phenomenon of Japanese success, with critical appraisal. *The Enigma of Japanese Power*,[3] a new general theory, is founded upon Karel van Wolferen's two or three decades' experience of the country. In part, it is a lively and good-humoured guide to the principal features and institutions of Japanese society. As an anatomy of Japan, it has some outstanding merits. It looks behind the annual report, the brochure, the party line, the consensus, the received wisdom and all manner of handouts. The eye is observant, but not without sympathy; sharp, but not cold. The style is accomplished, highly readable.

Here is another author who professes to be against any idea that Japan might be uniquely unique. He will tolerate no excuses offered on this basis, and warns his readers strongly against the Japan apologist, the obfuscatory sycophant, and the placatory diplomatist. For all his sympathy, he seems to see Japan primarily as a menace. This is not because of any conscious conspiracy among and between the leading estates of the polity, not because of the sheer strength of an imaginary Japan Inc., not out of *revanchisme*. It is simply because Japan is out of control, is not subject to the guiding authority of any person, party, or paraphernalia. Japan is a missile, fuelled by aimless devotion to the system which it represents and of which it is constituted. Launched at random, it is unfortunately likely to hit some sensitive target, probably in North America.

Mr van Wolferen concludes, a trifle tamely, that there may be some way of reaching some sort of settlement with this phoenix on automatic pilot. This will call for a high degree of skill on the part of other governments. But, in creating a new image or myth of Japan, Mr van Wolferen seems to be reverting to an uncomfortable degree of uniqueness in his analysis. He seems also to be removing from the Japanese any responsibility for the future. The book's principal thesis is its least convincing feature.

This thesis—that Japan lacks a necessary centre of accountable power—seems in itself to justify the arguments made in the other books noticed above, about the need for comparative studies in work which is designed to promote international understanding. Japan is a democracy, and its Constitution has provision for the checks and balances associated with systems of social and governmental organisation of this genre: the separation of powers is essential to it. Are we to understand that in this instance each check is too finely balanced? Where exactly are the centres of accountable power in other democracies?

Mr van Wolferen rates very poorly the status and as it were the vitality of the individual, as such, in Japanese society. The people are oppressed, enslaved by the impersonal system which has imposed itself upon them. Just as the social scientists are escaping from the group model, in their re-examination of contemporary Japan, Mr van Wolferen has chosen to resuscitate it. But if he cannot allow the bureaucracy to run the country, nor the industrialists, still less the politicians, perhaps he ought to give the job back to the people, rather than create his own System. Recent events in Japan suggest that the social scientists may be on the inside track. We might even conclude that jargon was better than Juggernaut. We could do worse than put our money on Colonel Isobé's successors, the unpretentious people, especially if they manage to acquire a very slightly less reticent dignity.

ACCORDING TO THE Constitution of Japan, sovereign power resides with the people, whose unity is symbolised by the Emperor. The Emperor also symbolises the State, but he derives his position from the will of the people. It is a matter of historical interpretation how far the new Constitution may have changed things effectively, at this level, for the idea of a constitutional monarchy reaches back into the early Meiji period. Outside Japan, the role of the late Emperor—the Shōwa Emperor—remains a matter of some controversy. Here again, revisionists are at work.

Edward Behr in *Hirohito: Behind the Myth*,[4] has set out to correct the balance, as he puts it, of that version of the Shōwa Emperor's role which has found general acceptance. Unfortunately, he has little, if any, new evidence to put forward which naturally conflicts directly with that version, and therefore has to rely heavily on interpretations of mostly familiar material. His technique I find unconvincing. He writes, for example, about the Emperor's "ineffectual and, almost certainly, deliberately half-hearted verbal reservations" about the militarists' plans for action in Manchuria and China. It is doubtful whether either the militarists' methods, or the extent, even the nature, of the problems which these methods posed for their critics in Japan 60 years ago have yet been fully understood. It is certain that Mr Behr cannot know what was in the Emperor's mind or heart at that time (or at any other).

He makes a great deal of such well-known episodes as General Tojo's later qualification of his remark before the

[3] *The Enigma of Japanese Power*. By KAREL VAN WOLFEREN. Macmillan, £16.95.

[4] *Hirohito: Behind the Myth*. By EDWARD BEHR. Hamish Hamilton, £15.95.

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International Military Tribunal that no Japanese subject would go against the will of His Majesty. This had an obvious technical significance in the court, but what it illustrated above all was the extent to which Tojo, like other totalitarians of that period, had become the prisoner of his own propaganda. Myths created by those who manipulated the Emperor-system may have very little connection with the Emperor, or none at all.

In truth, what lies behind whatever image you may have of the late Emperor, when you have also consulted the work of Professor Takeda,[5] and that of the established authorities, such as Professors Beasley and Storry, is an expanse of ignorance; but this is not ignorance in the sense of lack of learning: it is simply an absence of knowledge. This is one of history's empty quarters. It is not an area populated by all those whom Mr Behr would apparently wish to believe had been either seduced or bought. It is an area in which something very closely akin to the reticence of Colonel Isobé's dignity may have an honourable place.

It would not be right, however, to risk the imputation that Colonol Isobé was some kind of Sphinx. On the contrary, on the occasion of our last meeting he was perfectly explicit. He was as eager as ever to listen for one's linguistic mistakes and solecisms, his head cocked slightly to right (promising) or left (not so good), his lips at the half-purse. His outer clothing, ranging from dark fawn to dry bracken in colour, suggested a retired infantry officer experimenting with cavalry twill and cut; and parry, too, if challenged.

Sensing that he regarded me as a graduate (if as yet not of language, then possibly now of life), I congratulated him on the achievement of his state of conservation, and enquired whether there was a secret to it, which he might be willing to share with one no longer far from needing its reassurance. Colonel Isobé looked about him cautiously. Apparently seeking cover for a special confidence, he beckoned me towards a suitably isolated clump of azaleas, by which we might be shielded in privacy briefly from the crowd gathered on the lawn.

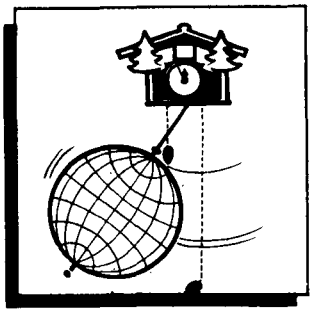
He confided in me that the secret of healthy longevity was an inheritance. Isobé was one of the ancient names: its bearers were the people of the sea-shore, as old as the rocks among which they dwelt. "It is simple", he said. "You must walk three miles every day."

He cocked his head back, to make certain that his message had been received: and burst into a smile of encouragement. "It is very simple", he repeated.

[5] Professor Kiyoko Takeda, *The Dual Image of the Japanese Emperor* (Macmillan, 1988).

The Elephant & the Chickens?

German Dilemmas—By ROGER MORGAN



GERMANY, in this spring and summer of 1989, has been the scene of a number of strange and striking events. 1989, we should recall, is the year that has brought the fortieth anniversaries of the Federal Republic, of the *DDR*, and of NATO; the fiftieth anniversary of the start of the War which ended with Germany's downfall and partition; and—while we are at it—the hundredth anniversary of the Second Workers' International, which vainly hoped that international socialism would abolish international war. Let us even recall another event with an anniversary in 1989—the French Revolution, whose many effects included the stirring-up of European patriotisms and nationalisms to a point where "the German Question" soon assumed a prominence and a potential for trouble which have been with us ever since. It has in fact been remarkable how much German media discussion there has been this year of the impact of the French Revolution on the German nation.

In the public life of the Federal Republic, the prelude to this year of anniversaries was an incident arising directly from yet another of them: the fiftieth anniversary, in November 1988, of the horrific pogrom of 1938 known as the *Reichskristallnacht*. Philipp Jenninger, the Speaker of the *Bundestag*, had to resign from his post after making a well-intentioned but grossly ill-presented memorial speech: a speech which, in exploring the historical reasons for German anti-Semitism, finished up by at least appearing to suggest that *tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner*. 1989 thus began with sensitive Germans particularly aware of the tense and problem-laden relationships between past, present, and future.

Other dramatic events soon followed. Within a few months, elections in West Berlin and in Frankfurt had seen the overthrow of the incumbent Christian Democratic administrations and their replacement by the Left; worse still, from Chancellor Kohl's point of view, the new Social Democratic mayors depended on the support of the radical Green Party, hitherto virtually excluded from public office (and in Berlin, the Greens or "Alternatives" took several key jobs in the new city government). Then, in the elections for the European Parliament in June, the Social Democrats lost slightly, and the Christian Democrats very heavily, both to the Greens and to a much more alarming new force on

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the far Right. The Republican Party of Franz Schoenhuber, even though it formally disavowed any Nazi sympathies, won more than 7% of the national vote (and in some parts of Bavaria, a staggering 20% or more) with slogans of a nationalistic, xenophobic, and even overtly racialist character which boded ill for the future.

One inescapable implication of this, which the established party leaders had to face, was that if the "Greens" and "Browns" were to achieve anything like their June 1989 score in the next federal election, due in December 1990, the parties ruling in Bonn since 1949—Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, and Free Democrats—would almost certainly have to share power with one or other of these unpalatable outsiders. All those concerned bravely continued to reassure themselves and the world with the old slogan that, despite this alarming prospect, "Bonn is not Weimar"; but one public figure at least (the *FDP* chairman Count Lambsdorff) commented that the similarity was too close for comfort. Chancellor Kohl's *CDU* and its Bavarian branch the *CSU* embarked on an agonising and in part self-destructive appraisal of how they should respond to the "Brown" challenge from the Right; while some Social Democrats and others on the Left began to argue that the 1990 election could well oust Kohl in favour of a "traffic-light" coalition (the red *SPD*, the yellow *FDP*, and the Greens).

While these domestic upheavals were in full swing, Bonn was engaged in an unprecedentedly vituperative conflict with its main allies in NATO, resisting American and British pressure for the "modernisation" of the short-range nuclear missiles based on German soil. German politicians of all parties argued that "modernisation" was in fact a euphemism for the replacement of America's obsolescent Lance missiles by weapons of much greater range and striking-power. And they were most reluctant to provoke the Soviet Union by taking this step at a moment when the successful "zero options" of 1987-88 had removed both NATO and Soviet intermediate-range missiles, leaving West Germany exposed as both the host and the potential target for almost all the shorter-range weapons remaining in Europe. Above all, German politicians from the Chancellor downwards refused to take a decision on the Lance affair until the election of 1990 was safely out of the way. (It is not hard to see that this election will become a competition in commitments *not* to "modernise".)

A fragile-looking compromise was patched up at NATO's fortieth anniversary event in Brussels in May; there would have to be a decision on the Lance issue, but only in 1991 or so, and meanwhile, East-West negotiations on short-range weapons would be brought forward—a further concession to German demands. By this time, however, the Western Alliance had seen an unparalleled assertion of German refusal to accept British or American views, and a sustained and outspoken German resentment at the idea that NATO's purpose still appeared to be, as Lord Ismay had half-seriously put it 40 years earlier, "to keep the Americans in, the Russians out, and the Germans down". Indeed, injured German allusions to what we might call the Ismay Doctrine have continued to reverberate all through the year.

German frustration and even indignation at being, as they saw it, "kept down", led the main opposition party, the *SPD*, to make a formal demand for the ending of the legal rights of the Allied armed forces, now regarded as an unacceptable limitation on German sovereignty 45 years after the end of the War. Some of the aspects of the Allied forces' status to which the *SPD* objected are concrete and specific: for instance, the right of these forces to carry out low-flying air exercises irrespective of German court decisions; their sovereign control of large areas of German airports; and their right to use German bases for military missions (such as the bombing of Libya in 1986) without consulting Bonn. Behind these specific grievances, however, lay a widespread German feeling that the limitations on German sovereignty which Adenauer had accepted as the price for NATO membership in the 1950s were discriminatory and insulting in the 1980s.

In any case, Germans increasingly asked, was American military protection really so necessary, now that the Soviet "threat" appeared to have declined to vanishing-point? Gorbachov's highly successful visit in June merely marked one stage in a process of growing German hopes that the "common European house" propagated by the Soviet leader would be one in which the Germans could feel safer, and could do something new about the German Question.

Quite apart from the promise of concessions from Gorbachov himself, anyone looking eastwards from Bonn in 1989 could see the Soviet bloc as a whole crumbling in ways which might well, it seemed, bring the total collapse of the *DDR* and perhaps some hitherto unthinkable new answers to the question of Germany's future. A non-Communist Prime Minister in Poland; Soviet backing for economic and political reforms everywhere; and above all the virtually open frontier between Hungary and Austria, which by September was allowing East Germans to escape westwards in tens of thousands. Honecker had indeed been received in Bonn with full state honours in 1987, but by 1989 it looked as if the state he represented might well, like its aged leader, be going into a terminal decline.

All these incidents of 1989 have occurred in a context in which German minds are more sensitive than for many decades to their country's position in the geography and the history of Europe. The *Zeitgeist* of the '80s has included a

Precarious jobs in the labour market regulation: The growth of atypical employment in Western Europe. Edited by G. and J. Rodgers

This book explores many questions, including the effects on individuals concerned; the indirect effects on the regular workforce; how changes in patterns of jobs and contractural arrangements derive from macro-economic conditions or from enterprise strategies; and the role of the State as employer or legislator. Information is given on the extent of different forms of atypical work and their growth in the 1970s and 1980s and mainly refers to Belgium, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

ISBN 92-9014-452-1 (hard) £15.40 ISBN 92-9014-453-X (limp) £11.00

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growing German preoccupation—an obsession, in the case of some intellectuals in West Berlin—with various forms of the ambiguous concept of *Mitteleuropa*: a Europe in which Germans would again feel at home in Riga and Budapest, as well as in Brussels and Paris, a reunited Europe in which Germany's division might also be overcome.

AGAIN, the ultra-sensitive character of Germany's recent history and its role in current politics (already manifest in the *Historikerstreit* or historians' quarrel of 1987-88 and in the Jenninger affair of 1988) made the headlines once more when a leading Bonn political scientist claimed to have evidence that no less a patriot than Konrad Adenauer had secretly compromised over the issue of German reunification. In the 1950s, it was claimed, Adenauer had secretly signed a formal agreement with Bonn's Western allies, stating that in exchange for their support for the reunification of the two Germanies, the Federal Republic renounced all claims to the former German territories east of the Oder-Neisse Line. In the climate of 1989, this suggestion that even Adenauer had been prepared formally to abandon Germany's notional right to "the frontiers of 1937"—officially still an integral part of Bonn's legal position, however unrealistic politically—was party-political dynamite. Even though Adenauer's alleged document was not brought to light, the controversy inflamed the already bitter conflict between the proponents of recognising the Oder-Neisse frontier as permanent (a gesture of German-Polish reconciliation which might have been especially effective in this anniversary year) and the hard-liners on Kohl's Right. These hard-liners, in fact, have succeeded in nailing the Bonn government to their point of view, and also in preventing either the Chancellor or the President from making a conciliatory visit to Poland, as was planned, on the fiftieth anniversary of the 1939 invasion.

What, then, are we to make of this clamour of demands for German self-assertion, German sovereignty, German demilitarisation, perhaps German neutralisation, and, for some, German reunification? An easy answer would be to say—as many observers of Germany have indeed been saying ever since the 1950s—that the endless *talk* about changing Germany's status is only a reflection of the fact that *action* in this direction is ruled out by the international consensus of East and West: as Italy's quasi-eternal Foreign Minister Andreotti memorably said of Germany's division in 1984, "They are two, and two they must remain".

Many experts continue to foresee a double future for Germany, a future bringing little if any change in the *status quo* that currently fixes each Republic in its respective bloc. The wise and experienced commentator Sebastian Haffner ends his shrewd survey, *Germany's Self-Destruction: The Reich from Bismarck to Hitler*[1]—of a century in which the restless *Reich* constantly upset the balance of Europe, and finished by destroying both the balance and itself—by opining that the unified *Reich* has gone for ever, and that (contrary to Bonn's official doctrine) even the Basic Law of 1949 does not lay an obligation on West Germany to work for reunification. Bonn itself, so Haffner argues, recognised this fact 30 years after the War's end by signing the Helsinki Agreement on European security and cooperation, which "makes no mention of a possible . . . reunification of the German states, thereby finally ending the thirty-year-long death agony of the German Reich".

Haffner's postulate of territorial stability on the basis of the *status quo* is echoed by the still-widespread view that the domestic scene in the Federal Republic is also likely to remain stable and to conform to the patterns we have always known and generally liked. George McGhee, whose well-documented account of his Ambassadorship to Bonn (1963-68), *At the Creation of a New Germany*,[2] will form an essential source-book for specialists on German-American relations, concludes with a distinctly upbeat assessment of the Federal Republic in the mid-1980s. He argues that American perceptions of an anti-NATO trend in Germany are:

> ". . . exaggerated, as demonstrated by Helmut Kohl's election in 1983 and the re-election in West Berlin in 1985 of the city's first Christian Democratic government since World War II. . . . At this writing, the openly anti-American Greens appear to have peaked. The *SPD*, although opposed to medium-range missiles, subsequently adopted a conciliatory, pro-NATO resolution at its May 1984 convention in Essen."

The events of the last year, as we have seen, have placed massive question-marks over Ambassador McGhee's projection of a stable, *CDU*-led Federal Republic (and West Berlin), as over Sebastian Haffner's picture of the two German states serenely accepting their lasting division. Pessimists—notably many French commentators on Germany—argue that the Federal Republic is falling prey to a mood of "national-neutralist pacifism", in which the revival of old-fashioned German self-interest is producing a readiness to abandon the Western Alliance and the European Community in order to conclude a new Rapallo Treaty with Moscow. Some of the pessimists find this a convincing scenario because they believe that Germany cannot be expected to tolerate its division forever (any more than France did in 1871-1918, or Poland in 1795-1918), and that national geopolitical interests, as well as dark forces in the Teutonic soul, will propel Germany in this fateful direction.

The optimists, on the other hand—and these include many British observers of the German scene—have tended to argue that despite all the sound and fury to be heard from the "Green" and "Brown" ends of the political spectrum, the West Germans are fundamentally committed to moderation, to the political centre, and to policies of caution. Their electoral system is virtually guaranteed to produce coalition governments in which any possible "extreme" tendencies of either the *SPD* or the *CDU/CSU* are countered by the *FDP*. Neither the *SPD* in the 1960s nor the *CDU/CSU* in the 1980s was able to gain power until it had adopted the essential elements of its predecessor's policies; the Greens now holding

[1] *Germany's Self-Destruction: The Reich from Bismarck to Hitler*. By SEBASTIAN HAFFNER. Simon & Schuster, $19.95, £13.95.

[2] *At the Creation of a New Germany: From Adenauer to Brandt: An Ambassador's Account*. By GEORGE MCGHEE. Yale University Press, $25.00, £20.00.

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office in Berlin are no exception to this rule. The 1990 election, in sum, is likely to produce a Bonn administration, whatever its nominal colours may be, which will not give the Western Alliance, or the world in general, more trouble—or at least not *much* more trouble—than its predecessors in the last 40 years.

EACH SIDE can produce considerable evidence for its view. The pessimists are no doubt right to underline the fact that Germany's situation lays Bonn open to strong and manifold temptations, at a time when East-West relations seem to be in a state less of flux than of flood. There is no doubt that Gorbachov's hazy but alluring visions of a new future for Europe have encouraged Bonn to persist in the role it has usually played in the last twenty years, that of being the most optimistic and the most risk-inclined member of NATO, as far as *détente* is concerned. The Western Alliance is likely to see several re-enactments of variants of the Lance missile argument of early 1989, in which a general NATO desire for some form of military strengthening, modernisation, or whatever, collides head-on with a German preference for East-West negotiation and the pursuit of *détente*.

And yet the pessimists surely go too far in their fantasy of a Germany bolting from the Western camp, abandoning NATO and the European Community for the sake of a united future for the German nation. The optimists' reading of recent history, sketched above, contains a lot of truth, and a West German government—*any* West German government—will always have powerful reasons, in the end, for continuing to give priority to Bonn's links with the West.

The intricate nature of these links, and the often contradictory entanglements of the Federal Republic with the outside world, are explored with deep insight and splendid clarity in Professor Wolfram Hanrieder's excellent (and beautifully-written) study of the 40-year history of Bonn's foreign relations, *Germany, America, Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy*.[3] The author, who has kept closely in touch with German affairs from his post at the University of California, has over the last twenty years produced several outstanding works on Germany and on Europe in general. In this monumental synthesis, he skilfully sets out the combination of dangers and opportunities, of problems and challenges, which the outside world has presented to the Federal Republic and its leaders, from Adenauer to Kohl. Hanrieder's mastery of the detail is deeply impressive, whether he is writing about the intricacies of Arms Control problems from the Non-Proliferation Treaty to the INF agreement, or about the issues of trade and finance accompanying Germany's "economic miracle" and its growing impact on a world system characterised, *inter alia*, by the decline of the economic hegemony of the United States.

As Hanrieder makes clear, the fundamental problem which underlies every aspect of Germany's interaction with its European and global environment is that the Federal Republic, for all its economic power and political clout, has not been able to achieve the two basic political aims it set itself at the beginning. Indeed, these two aims—the disappearance of the Bonn Republic into a reunited Germany on the one hand, and its absorption into a federated United States of (Western) Europe on the other—were perhaps incompatible. The story of the Federal Republic's foreign relations (not all "foreign" either, in the crucial case of *Deutschlandpolitik*) is the story of a political entity whose leaders seriously worked to bring its existing form to an end, in favour of either a united Germany or a united Europe, or perhaps both.

For nearly 40 years, progress towards these goals was painfully, excruciatingly slow. The global situation, sometimes one of Cold War, sometimes one of East-West *détente*, did over time allow *some* progress towards a coming-together of the German nation (though emphatically not an end to its division into two hostile states). Meanwhile, the European Community, to be sure, made *some* kind of progress towards political union in the 30 years separating the Treaty of Rome (1957) from the Single European Act (1987). But in many essential ways Europe remained a Europe of national units (as de Gaulle and then Thatcher insisted it always must be), and not surprisingly the economic giant, the Federal Republic, emerged as something like an elephant among a flock of chickens.

One interpretation of the current ferment in Germany would be to say that the world has changed in ways which at last make progress towards Germany's long-cherished goals at least a thinkable possibility, and that Germans inevitably find this prospect deeply unsettling. As regards the prospect westwards from Bonn, the Single European Act and the dynamism of the drive towards the open market of 1992 have breathed at least a degree of new substance into the old vision of a united Western Europe. Of course, the Community will not easily become what Willy Brandt in 1973 called "a rational form of government for Europe" (and the *Bundesbank*, for sure, will not abdicate to a European Central Bank in a hurry), but at least German firms, banks, trade unions and *Land* governments are already busily engaged in shaping a West European structure which will be

[3] *Germany, America, Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy*. By WOLFRAM F. HANRIEDER. Yale University Press, $29.95, £19.95.

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more like a system of collective governance than anything we have seen so far.

Looking eastwards, the Germans can see prospects for action—in this case, action directed towards improving the lot of the German nation—which offer an even stronger contrast to the frustrations of the last 40 years. As real challenges loom up—the challenge of accommodating hundreds of thousands more Germans in the crowded Federal Republic, or of granting the *DDR* massive economic aid (perhaps in return for political concessions which might undermine its viability as a system?)—it is not surprising that the Bonn government, deeply uncertain what to do, should above all stress its determination not to destabilise the precarious balance of power in Europe. This means in other words, at least for the moment, not to reach out for a chance to carry out the policy of reunification which has been the Federal Republic's official *Staatsräson* (a term meaning, confusingly, something more like *raison d'être* than *raison d'état*) for 40 years. . . .

A policy of calculated restraint on Bonn's part will preserve the confidence of the international community (as on so many occasions in the last 40 years), but the big question is whether such a policy will be acceptable to the impatient voters within West Germany. Whichever party they vote for—in the federal election of December 1990, or in the crucial *Land* elections in the earlier months of that year—not many are likely to accept without question the mixture as before: small steps, and small steps only, in the building of the European Community, in the maintenance of NATO, and in the development of relations with the East.

By the time NATO makes its much-heralded decision about the Lance missiles in 1991 (if it does), or the European Community achieves whatever degree of integration it does achieve in 1992, the friends and partners of Germany will no doubt have seen further dramatic events there, and heard further noisy arguments. All three of the books reviewed here will help their readers to make sense of what is going on: Haffner's, by its reminder of an earlier period when Germany and Europe interacted in quite different ways—fortunately for us—from those of the present; McGhee's, by its vivid reconstruction (based heavily on contemporary official documents) of a stage in Bonn's international development when military, economic, and political issues all seemed to become hyperactive at the same time; and Hanrieder's, for its superbly balanced, penetrating, and thought-provoking survey of the entire 40-year record.

Islam on the Move?

The Will to Power—By P. J. VATIKIOTIS

RECENTLY a Home Office Minister was reported as having written to leaders of the Muslim community in Britain, urging them to cooperate by assimilating in the life and culture of the country where they had chosen to settle. His plea was apparently prompted by the trouble occasioned by Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, the furore it caused, and the death threat issued by the late Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran against its author for having insulted Islam and Muslims, and for being an apostate.

The hapless Minister was obviously unaware that Muslims, on the whole, are not interested in any cooperation that may lead to assimilation, and for very good reason. For they are enjoined by Allah through His revelation to His Prophet Muhammad in the Holy Koran that power belongs to God, His apostle, and the believers who must make every effort to realise His divine pattern for the world; that is, make His revealed word (which is also the Sacred Law) supreme on earth until the whole world is governed by it.

Even more recently, Robert Kilroy-Silk in a feature article in *The Times* wondered why Christians (read: the Western powers) were not making a stand against the excesses of Muslim fanaticism, especially in Lebanon. These two incidents may suggest that there are at last some in the West who are beginning to appreciate the significance of the Muslims' own distinction between Muslim and non-Muslim, and to place in perspective the militant Muslims' campaign not simply to reject modernity—a product of Western culture and a characteristic of Western civilisation—but also to rid all Muslim lands of Western influence and presence (as, for instance, Khomeini in Iran, the radical Shia fundamentalists in Lebanon and elsewhere, and the stirring Central Asian Muslims in the Soviet Union.

Are we then witnessing a renewed clash of cultures, a hostile confrontation between the worlds of Islam and Christendom; or a new kind of East-West (North-South) Cold War?

The widely held belief in an Islamic resurgence has been partly forced on observers because of events in Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. It is helpful, though, to remember that the invocation of Islam by Muslim communities in times of crisis is not new. Islam has always served as the basis of identity and social cohesion for the majority of Muslims; it also serves as a handy mobilising and unifying agent in the hands of rulers in times of crisis. Even though, over the last 150 years or so, Islam (the faith and the

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law) has been relentlessly relegated to a minor role in the conduct of public, economic, state, and international affairs, it has nevertheless played and still plays a leading role in movements of national independence, nationality, and ethnic separatism among Muslims throughout the world.

In domestic politics and the politics between, say, states in the Middle East, Islam is periodically pushed to the fore, as in Egypt in the inter-War period over the issues of the Caliphate and the British connection, in Nasser's regional Arab policy, and during the 1960s in the rivalry between rulers for the leadership of the Arab world. Similarly, in confronting the non-Islamic world (the international community of nation-states) use is made of Islamic summit conferences for the formulation of common Islamic policy.

Islam also remains, with varying degrees of emphasis between states, a basis of legitimacy, a source of cultural identity. It distinguishes Muslims from the alien and, in their eyes, hostile non-Islamic world. What we have been witnessing recently, perhaps, is a more vociferous, more determined, and (in the last decade or so) better-financed assertion by certain Islamic rulers and groups, including radical-militant movements, of an Islamic cultural-political identity that wishes to distinguish, separate itself from, and challenge another internationally dominant imprint of world modernity, based on Western industrial (Christian) civilisation. The financing came from petroleum; the enthusiastic or fanatic followers from the frustrations of economic deprivation, political oppression, and powerlessness. But there is only a thin dividing line between genuine belief that Islam can really be a credible vehicle for social, economic and political change, or an efficacious organising principle of public order and the exclusive basis of political authority, and the use of that belief by rulers and leaders for their own purposes.

THE RELATION between Islam and political power has always been problematic. Thus Muslims have disagreed over whether or not the Prophet founded a state and a government; and, if he had, whether or not there had been an Islamic state after him. Equally problematic has been the relation between Islam and modernity (read: Islam and the West), at least since the beginning of the 19th century. In Iran the Ayatollah Khomeini led a popular, mass, radical, militant Islamic movement against the Shah, rejecting transplanted "modernity" as alien, irrelevant, and corrupt. The centrifugal forces represented by the sectarian and ethnic mosaic of the country, however, endangered both his movement and his nation's unity. Thus the régime's confrontation with the US and the protracted war with neighbouring Iraq tended to destabilise the Gulf region, and alienate neighbouring Muslim Arab states.

Shia Islam, it could be argued, is a minority heterodox sect which differs from Islam in other countries; its peculiar militancy is not particularly attractive to Muslims everywhere. But Sunni Islam has its militant variants too, and the conditions under which Islamic militancy erupted in Iran could exist elsewhere. Power in the Islamic states of the Middle East for a long time remained in the hands of older traditional ruling élites, often supported and protected by infidel European powers, sectarian minorities, military juntas and oligarchies. But demographic profusion and change during the last 25 years have produced a mass of disaffected humanity which now provides radical populist and militant religious movements with a vast recruiting ground of followers for whom Islam is the sole basis of identity, a sense of belonging to a community and an ethic. With readier access to money and arms than in the past, their transformation into rebels and holy warriors becomes easier. They can be led not only against their own respective governments, but also against those outsiders or non-Muslims whom they presume have undermined their cultural and political autonomy.

They are thus emboldened to assert their intention and ability to modernise their societies without recourse to Western or other alien non-Islamic values. They also tend dangerously to disregard the internationally recognised boundaries of nation-states, ignoring—and flouting—the rules and conventions of international state conduct. In their zealous pursuit of the ideal theocracy, of Islamic state and public order, they threaten the survival of other sectarian and ethnic communities in their midst—in fact, all those culturally different (the "other")—and endanger world peace.

THESE BROAD ASPECTS of radical, militant—or what Arab Muslims refer to as "political" Islam have been fairly adequately covered and discussed by the earlier works of Professor Emmanuel Sivan of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, editor of the *Jerusalem Quarterly*, in his scholarly and imaginative monograph, *Radical Islam: Medieval Theory and Modern Politics* (1985); by Gilles Kepel's masterly tract on the militant Islamic groups and organisations in Egypt, *Muslim Extremism in Egypt: The Prophet and Pharaoh* (1986; original French edition *Le Prophète et Pharaoh*, 1984); and by my Patten Foundation Lectures on Islam and the Nation-State delivered in the United States in 1982 and subsequently published as *Islam and the State* (1987).

The first three books which I want to consider here are of a somewhat different order and thrust. They are surveys of Islamic fundamentalism, and hardly touch upon the intricacies of belief, law, or the relation between the faith and organised political power. In parts they are assertive of rising Islamic power, however defined or vague that may be, and are broadly apologetic about the superiority of Islam as the basis of a new and better civilisation or the restoration of an earlier one. But they do raise the question: is the world on the threshold of an "Islamic Age" in the next century, marking the total decline of Western civilisation, the obsolescence of its culture, and the final retreat of its power?

Any such supposition, however, begs a further question. For, in order to predominate as the basis of a new civilisation and a world culture in succession to that which currently prevails, one must determine whether or not Islam can revitalise itself and regenerate Muslim society by resolving several fundamental questions about man, nature, ethics, morality, and power in a post-industrial age. One must also

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assume that Western societies and culture are unable to renew themselves. For Muslims, moreover, there is also the question of whether Islam can bring power under the jurisdiction and control of the *Sharia*, the Sacred Law, so that the word of God may triumph in the rule of man on earth.

The West earlier in this century tried to make over some parts of the Islamic community, the *Umma*—politically, at least—in its own image. The experiment did not simply fail; it was finally rejected by the Muslims themselves, who asserted that they already had their own superior culture. They emphasised their difference from non-Muslim culture, and their rejection of Western ideologies and corollary political arrangements not only because these were inapplicable but even more because they were irrelevant, contrary, and inferior to what their Islamic faith had to offer. It is, in a sense, this "euphoria of superiority" ("What I as a Muslim do, from preaching to terrorism, is in the name of God; what you the Westerner do is exploitation, colonialism, and imperialism") which comes through in these books.

THE MOST AMBITIOUS and the most haphazard is Akbar S. Ahmed's *Discovering Islam*.[1] In his attempt to establish the existence of something that he calls "Islamic Anthropology", Mr Ahmed postulates a theory of Islamic history which is not a theory at all, only a preferred schema for his own discussion. He argues that the central dialectic or tension in that history is the constant striving of Muslims to attain the ideal—and, for the militant among them, to impose it on the real. But he does not tell us what the goals of "ideal Islam" are. He emphasises power. Is power the aim of its most ardent exponents and advocates?

Without adequate knowledge or expertise, Mr Ahmed deals with Shia revolution and the role of mahdis and "millennial" (i.e. millenarian) movements in Islam, describing them as the bulwarks against European encroachment. He attacks the European colonial impact on Muslim societies and depicts European scholars' understanding of Islam as tendentious, but does not support this depiction with any argument. He does not acknowledge that it was Europeans who inaugurated the systematic study of Islam and its religion, culture and society in their universities as early as the 18th century. He romantically idealises the Sufis and Sufism in Islam, seemingly unaware that its initial rise had anything to do with the nature of the Islamic polity and rule of the time. Nor, perhaps, does he quite understand the nature of the Renaissance in Europe, with its Graeco-Roman philosophical and political antecedents.

Mr Ahmed pens an encomium of "the Saudi miracle" without once asking himself whether there has been any structural change in the Saudi economy and society. He marvels at the new universities in Arabia, without showing the slightest concern over their standards of scholarship. He trumpets Muslim scholarly accomplishments, but completely disregards its most intriguing development, namely, a liberal school in Islam, with Muslims debating basic issues in Islamic law, theology, and society with their radical militant fellow-Muslims. He ignores the use of force by militant Muslim fundamentalist "scholars" to intimidate their critics when they lose the argument in debate. His chosen heroes in this connection are Hasan el Banna, founder and first Supreme Guide of the Muslim Brethren in Egypt, and Abul A 'la' al-Mawdudi—ideologue of the paramilitary Islamic militant organisations, the Jamaati Islam in Pakistan and the Fedayani Islam in Iran—who preached violent armed sedition against existing state structures and constituted governments.

The author indulges in the usual ineffectual apologia for Islam reminiscent of Muslim reformers earlier this century, by proclaiming humanism and science as its central attributes. El Banna, however, stated clearly and unequivocally that "there can be no civil society in Islam", that is, no humanism; that what Muslims demand is "power for all of us", until they "raise the banner of the Koran everywhere" (*Majmu'at Rasa'il,* p.p. 20 and 180-84), and that radical or militant Islam rejects Western humanism and science—that is, the liberal values of a civil society.

It is not clear from Mr Ahmed's discussion of these matters whether he is alert to the fact that European (or Western) humanism and scholarship generally embarked on its intellectual enterprise by asking a different set of questions about man, nature, and society. Its protagonists abandoned the older cosmological approach in favour of an anthropological approach to the understanding of the world around them, both their natural and their political universe. Even when the author discusses other trends of the Left or the Right in the Muslim world, such as liberalism, secularism, nationalism, etc., he seems oblivious to the strictly emulative nature and "infidel" provenance of these ideas.

Mr Ahmed cannot resist castigating his Western readers further, by asserting that their colonialism eroded the position and role of women in Islam. This leads him to even more apologetics: women, he says, fared better in Islam until the West arrived. It is difficult to take such statements seriously. (Hatred of the West, incidentally, is not strictly a consequence of colonialism; it has a longer history, going back at least to the 10th century.)

AMUSING TOO is the author's confusion over the change in the direction of prayer from Jerusalem to Mecca, or even why it should have been toward Jerusalem in the first place. In fact, there is no shred of evidence from what he writes that he actually knows the reasons for the change. Alas, there is nothing in this book to suggest even the bare outlines of something one could call "Islamic anthropology", beyond the fact that some Muslims write about anthropology. Nor is there any attempt to discuss the actual problems of Muslim society, or the difficulties accompanying the fairly massive migration of Muslims to the North and West.

There is, however, disrespect for facts. Thus it was not Jewish troops that perpetrated the massacre in Sabra and Shatila, but Christian Lebanese forces (perhaps avenging earlier massacres of their co-religionists by mainly Muslim Palestinians in Lebanon). And the author's remarks about American society are reminiscent of the superficial portrayal

[1] *Discovering Islam: Making Sense of Muslim History and Society.* By AKBAR S. AHMED. Routledge, £9.95.

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of that society by the militant Muslim Brother ideologue, the late Sayyed Qotb (convicted, sentenced to death, and executed by the Nasser régime for his seditious activities against the state and public order). Mr Ahmed clearly is not familiar with the history of the evolution of the American federal republic and the attendant problems of the largest mass democracy in history. Its ailments today are common to all industrial and post-industrial societies.

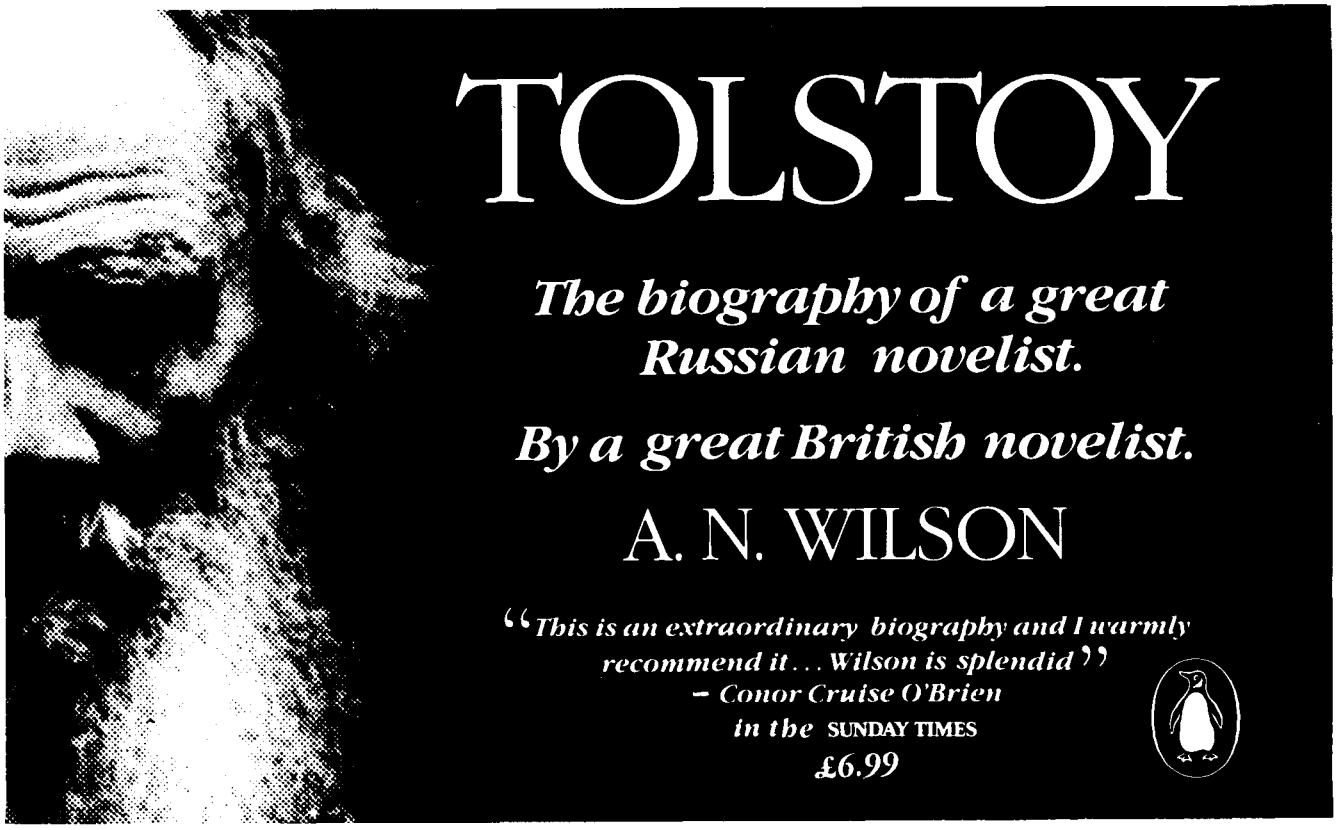
Mr Ahmed is both wrong and gratuitously hostile when he avers that "the Western perception of the revivalism, rediscovery and resurgence of Islam is faulty, as the West links it with Arab oil, PLO guerrillas and Imam Khomeini". The major studies of an earlier Islamic revivalism and resurgence were by Westerners, if their work on Afghani, Abduh, and the reformist school in Islam which they founded is any indication; or their studies of the mahdist and more forceful resistance to European expansion and influence in North Africa and the Sudan, or Turkey and Iran. Surely Mr Ahmed has at least heard of C. C. Adams, H. A. R. Gibb, E. G. Browne, A. K. S. Lambton, W. C. Smith, P. M. T. Holt, and many others? The difference today is that the present wave of Islamic resurgence is not merely intensely hostile to the rest of the world, but also preaches violent combat against it (or at least against those it considers its leaders), including the promotion, sponsoring, and organisation of acts of terrorism.

Nor is Mr Ahmed struck by the greatest difficulty facing the current Islamic revival: its intolerance of the other, the different, because it insists on viewing itself as an open threat to everything that is not Muslim in its drive for hegemony as a potential power throughout the world.

What one is left with is a rambling, emotional—at times frenetic—message: an apologia for Islam. For, despite his high-flown intentions, Mr Ahmed does not really address any of the core issues relating to values and perceptions, the matter of a private and public ethic in Islam in the late 20th century. No question is raised about the nature of the *Sharia*, or the separation between state power and society. If Islam does not encourage duality, as the author tells us, still less does it encourage pluralism—basically because it must dominate and have exclusive control. If Islam and Muslims survived as a minority in Soviet Central Asia without recourse to *jihad* or migration (*hijra*: flight), then Islam, as it believes, will and must prevail as the dominant trend of the future, since it is the best, indeed the perfect, answer to all men's problems.

DILIP HIRO'S *Islamic Fundamentalism*[2] is a journalist-pundit's "quick fix" survey of the subject. Readers who desire a facile, superficially credible introduction to what Westerners largely refer to as Islamic fundamentalism, will find it in this seductively attractive book, which is ultimately misleading and consistently simplified, especially in its early parts which deal with "the Rise of Islam". The author makes a bid for pedantic erudition—thus "Shiaism" instead of the venerable age-old usage of "Shiism"—but appears not to have understood the actual meaning of the term "shia". Its earliest connotation in

[2] *Islamic Fundamentalism*. By DILIP HIRO. Revised and updated. Paladin, £4.99.



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Islamic usage referred to a political faction or party in Islam, and not to any particular religious doctrine; that was developed later as the need of that political faction required it.

The Shia began as the party of Ali rather than of any particular theology or system of beliefs evolved by Ali ben Abi Talib, the Prophet's son-in-law. In its early stages, it implied primarily a political struggle in favour of Ali's candidacy for the caliphal office. It was only through later theological disputations and popular legendary fabrications that the term acquired a religious meaning. It occurred as a major schism in the Islamic community before its theological crystallisation into a religious-dogmatic difference.

Nor does the author seem particularly knowledgeable about the critical early political role of the Umayyads in Mecca, even at the time of the Prophet, or with the fact that without their political leadership of an expanding Islamic dominion in the first century of Islam, both the faith and the newly founded community could well have foundered. One must assume that Mr Ahmed is more familiar with the earliest historical literature, written primarily by anti-Umayyad authors who naturally tended to denigrate and demote the Umayyad performance and role.

WHEN DISCUSSING the Salafiya Islamic reform movement led by Sheikh Rashid Rida, a disciple of Muhammad Abduh, or the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Dilip Hiro fails to deal with—actually, he completely overlooks—the involvement of these movements in domestic politics as well as in regional inter-Arab politics. He does not once consider why a massive religio-political movement with an elaborate social, economic, and paramilitary capability failed to accede to power—especially at a time when the secular ruling classes and their institutions were at their weakest and widely unpopular. Nor does he hazard a discussion of any link between these older mass organisations and the more militant societies which have surfaced in the last two decades and which, upon closer examination, appear to be their radical offspring. While he remarks that "The emergence of an independent economic base to sustain the Islamic groups was a new and important development in the history of fundamentalism in Egypt", he fails to report that the government (the Mubarak régime) proscribed and dissolved some of the new financial institutions for illegal practices.

One wonders, too, where the newspaper *Al Nidhar* (*The Struggle*), published by the Brotherhood in Syria, is to be found, especially as *al-nidhar* simply does not mean "struggle". There is, incidentally, a Muslim Brotherhood publication called *al-Nadhir* that appears regularly, and another which is called *al-Bayan,* both of them constituting a major opposition forum against the Asad régime.

Finally, what are (if any) some of the major institutions that stand in the way of the success of fundamentalism in Egypt in the sense of its accession to power? If they exist, they do not figure in Mr Hiro's survey.

It is, of course, true that an "Islamic government requires an Islamic ruler", as the author states. It is not true, however, that "Muslims agree that an Islamic ruler must be a Just *Faqih*". No respectable Islamic work on the caliphate, the imamate, or the state suggests—let alone states—such a requirement or qualification. It is strictly Khomeini's invention, accepted by Mr Hiro. It is not necessary for the ruler to "know the *Sharia* thoroughly"; what is necessary is that he must defend it and ensure its application in the conduct of the affairs of the community.

"Since Khomeini visualizes the people as a political force, the system can be described as republican, but within an Islamic context", opines Mr Hiro, thus contributing a new, albeit bizarre definition of "republic". I wonder what constitutional lawyers would make of it. Elections and representative government are not at the core of an Islamic political system—whatever its apologists, including Khomeini, may say. They are alien borrowings and intrusions into that system.

Along with many other writers on Islam today, Mr Hiro appeals to the great 14th-century Muslim writer Ibn Khaldun, but without any tangible results or benefit. One wonders whether any of them have ever read the man's work. But ever since Western sociologists and anthropologists discovered him—having first overlooked Polybius before him—he has become a most respectable crutch for all kinds of argument.

AMIR TAHERI'S *Crescent in a Red Sky,*[3] a hefty monograph about Islam in the USSR, is a sensible, well-narrated chronicle of developments in Muslim Central Asia. In a way, it complements the earlier pioneering work of Alexandre Bennigsen and H. Carrère d'Encausse. The author, a Paris-based Iranian journalist, argues that the growth of Islam in the Soviet Union is spontaneous and indigenous, not fostered or sponsored by outside powers, reflecting the vitality of Islam as faith and culture.

Mr Taheri chronicles the 500-year relationship of conflict and hostility between the Muslims of Central Asia and the Russian-dominated power centre in Moscow under the Czars and the Bolsheviks alike. He notes that this area, which constitutes a rich part of the Russian Empire, remains under police rule as a source of wealth—oil, gas, coal, cotton, and agricultural produce. It is, however, also the least industrialised part of the Soviet Union, since Moscow sees it primarily as a source of raw materials. In this Russian perception, the author detects the classic type of colonial relation between Moscow and Muslim Central Asia.

To the extent that Russians never settled there permanently in any numbers (except as Party and industry bosses, agents, and experts), Muslim Central Asians consider them colonialists and agents of Russian (Moscow) domination. The author records the relation between Moscow and the Muslim Central Asian republics of the USSR under several Soviet leaders from Lenin to Gorbachov in order to highlight the underprivileged position of these republics, the movements of resistance and separatism in them, and the ever-present role of Islam. He argues that Gorbachov's *perestroika* is perceived by Central Asian Muslims as working to

[3] *Crescent in a Red Sky: The Future of Islam in the Soviet Union.* By AMIR TAHERI. Hutchinson, £16.95.

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the advantage of the privileged European Russian community and ruling class. They consider Gorbachov himself to be a Europe-oriented Soviet leader, who is hostile to the Central Asian Muslims very much in the tradition of his predecessors—the CPSU Secretaries-General and the Czars.

National separatist movements elsewhere in the Soviet Union have had their counterparts in the Central Asian republics, especially in this past decade. In trying to curb or contain these, Moscow has blamed Islam. Attempts to restrict Muslim practices (pilgrimage and other rites and ceremonies, shrines and places of worship) have led to further disturbances and to a greater resentment of Moscow by the Muslims, who feel that Islam itself is threatened by a racist Russian ruling class that portrays its Muslim citizens as backward.

One can hardly quarrel with Taheri's meticulously detailed narrative of the Central-Asian Moscow relationship as one of dependence; or with his depiction of a Muslim population which inhabits roughly 75% of the territory of the USSR and makes up about 30% of its population as the junior partner in an unequal relation to the rest of the Soviet Union, and thus reflecting the division/separation between Asiatic Muslims and European Russians; or with his careful documentation of the discrimination practised by the Moscow authorities against them.

A TRICKIER AREA of Taheri's work lies in the influence and impact of the Khomeini revolution in Iran, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, and the wider movement of Islamic resurgence on the Muslims of Central Asia. That there is an attempt to revitalise Islamic teachings and practices and to revive Muslim languages that have been deliberately suppressed by Soviet policy is not in doubt, and these matters are adequately covered by the author. More problematic is the spread and size of radical Islamic groups in the Central Asian republics as a result of this influence and in response to these events. Are these developments in the Central Asian republics part of the widespread resurgence of fundamentalist militant Islam, or part of the broader national separatist movement from the Baltic to Central Asia and the Caucasus in the Soviet Union?

Given that under *perestroika* Muslims are demanding greater freedom of religious education and practice—that is, greater cultural autonomy—Taheri suggests that this is an aspect of a wider revival of Islam as the best defence against loss of identity. This restores religion to the centre of political life in the Asian USSR; in time, it will lead to a demand for greater autonomy and eventually independence, and thus to the end of the Russian Empire. Crucial to this new struggle will be the central role of Islam as the major force for cultural autonomy and national political independence in Central Asia, and therefore constituting the most powerful enemy of Russian colonialism and the greatest threat to the integrity of the Soviet Union.

With the current decline of Communism (as an ideology) and the inadequacy of existing Soviet structures to meet the new challenges in the USSR, Taheri gladly—triumphantly—concludes that Islam will emerge as the more appropriate and therefore more successful substitute ideology. Hence its current resurgence. He goes so far as to suggest that the Muslim republics of Central Asia, which could provide the basis for an economically stronger and more prosperous Soviet Union, may (once they become independent republics) find their own economic prosperity to support their political independence in extensive cultural and trading ties with their co-religionists from Turkey, Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan to Arabia, Egypt, and North Africa.

LET ME NOW TURN to two very different books. Drawing upon his earlier work on medieval Islamic history, Daniel Pipes, director of the Foreign Policy Institute in Philadelphia and editor of its journal *Orbis*, examines in *The Long Shadow*[4]—a collection of previously published essays and articles on Islam and public life, the Persian Gulf, the Arab-Israeli conflict, terrorism, the United States and the Middle East, and the role of the media—certain contemporary issues and events on the basis of the historical and existential pervasiveness of Islam, the faith and culture, and its influence on Muslim societies.

Mr Pipes emphasises Islam as the central cultural feature of all Muslim societies, wherever they may be, and argues that where fundamentalism develops in these societies it wants to apply the sacred law of Islam to all aspects of private and public life. The *Sharia* promotes a vision of a polity ordered by Islamic principles, and is motivated by a deep hostility to modernity, and to the West. Polities not based on Islamic principles are illegitimate and their rulers usurpers. But beyond referring to the dialectic of "the real versus the ideal" over the application of the *Sharia*, Mr Pipes does not discuss how a polity ordered by Islamic principles is to come about; or how the fundamentalists propose to bring it about; and why, so far, they have not.

He does refer to the three most common variants of Muslim response to the challenges of the 20th century, or to those of European control and modernity—namely, reformism, secularism, and fundamentalism. But he does not illustrate any of these beyond saying that the élites that acceded to political power chose secularism; the Establishment of traditionalist Islam chose reformism; and the lower strata of society, the masses, chose fundamentalism.

None of this is very enlightening or original. The author's more original assertion—that Western, especially American, culture constitutes the greatest threat to fundamentalist Islam, and that it is seen as such by, for instance, the Khomeini régime and its successors in Iran and by fundamentalists everywhere—would have had greater force had he discussed at some length the assertions he makes. Yet he uses this general observation to explain the intense, near obsessive, hostility of Iran to the USA, and its determination to expel it and all other Western presence from Muslim lands. The argument is attractive. Pipes concludes that what happened in Iran and the Gulf is an illustration of the power of Islam in the affairs of that region, and that Iranian success

[4] *The Long Shadow: Culture and Politics in the Middle East.* By DANIEL PIPES. Transaction Publishers (distributors: Harper & Row), £24.95.

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under Khomeini set in motion the expulsion of Westerners from Muslim countries in the Middle East, beginning with Iran and Lebanon. He underlines his view that Western culture remains the greatest threat to the wider application of Islam as the basis of public order mainly because it is so seductive that Muslims tend to succumb to it.

Most interesting is Mr Pipes's discussion of the Iran-Iraq war, the Arab-Israeli conflict, Syria, terrorism, and American policy in the Middle East. Unlike other analysts so far, he correctly emphasises the irredentist aspect of the Gulf War as a territorial dispute between Iraq and Iran over boundaries—the control of Shatt el Arab. Thus he rightly, in my view, emphasises the geography and economics of the war rather than the religious factor in the dispute.

EQUALLY ENGAGING but not quite as original as its author would like to think (in fact wholly "old hat") is Mr Pipes's suggestion that the Arab-Israeli conflict has been intractable because it is essentially an Arab-Arab conflict over Palestine, highlighting inter-Arab rivalries. He refers to this aspect of the conflict as the abiding Arab dimension. But he has something to contribute when dealing with Syria's role and the PLO separatists, although he fails to say in whose eyes they are "separatists". In fact, his whole discussion of the PLO is dated. Much of what he says here is a synthetic distillation of what was said by several others before him.

Mr Pipes's attractive designation of Syria as "the Cuba of the Middle East" is based on the argument that it leads the resistance and opposition to the American presence in that region, and enables the Soviet Union to maintain a foothold there. As he moves on to a consideration of US policy in the Middle East under a succession of Presidents and Administrations, he expresses bold and forthright—indeed, outspoken—views about these matters, as well as about resurgent and fundamentalist Islam. He makes a strong plea that the threat posed by Islamic fundamentalists should be taken seriously, however "ludicrous their aims and claims". For he insists that, having failed to attain power via their brief emulation of the West, Muslims have felt the decline of Islam (of Islamic power, that is) very painfully. Consequently the sharp dichotomy between Muslim and non-Muslim becomes even sharper when fundamentalists believe that revived Islam will make the faithful great and powerful once again.

The West, however, remains the principal obstacle to the full application of Islam; it must therefore be rooted out from Muslim lands by every means, including terrorism. The assault on Western civilisation then is total and determined, and (unlike others) Pipes asks what Western response is possible to this all-out assault. In considering the options, he does not rule out the use of force.

Because of a shrill tone in Mr Pipes's discussion of certain issues, such as his unexceptionable attack on the Syrian régime, some, facilely and hastily, may label him an alarmist, and detract from the otherwise well-documented and cogently argued premises of his work. Most important is his proposition that one of the principal objectives of Islamic fundamentalism, as represented by the régime in Iran and the Shia militants in Lebanon with their bombings and kidnappings, is the extirpation of the Western presence from the Middle East. Equally important is his direct criticism of the exaggerated sentimentality of American Presidents in dealing with such sensitive and critical matters as hostages and hijackings, when they often place human- and personal-interest considerations above important national-interest considerations of policy.

Finally, Mr Pipes's explanation of why all debate about US policy in the Middle East constitutes a special, peculiar area of US foreign policy—at variance with the debate on foreign policy in other regions of the world with which American policy-makers have to deal—is fairly novel and challenging. So also is his comment on the inordinate obsession of the media with news from and about Israel.

JUST AS SCHOLARLY, but more narrowly focused, is Lawrence Rosen's *The Anthropology of Justice*,[5] originally presented as the Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures on the Anthropology of Law at the University of Rochester, New York, in 1985. Mr Rosen tries to demonstrate the theoretical basis for a cultural analysis of law —in this instance, Islamic law as applied in the courts of the Sefrou district of Morocco. In trying to integrate the two disciplines of law and anthropology, the author studied the practice of *qadis* (judges of Islamic courts) by perusing the reports of cases that came before them: that is, the court records. But he is specifically looking at law as part of a wider local culture—a situation in which judges are not circumscribed by codified legal rules and precedents but are free to adjudicate disputes on the basis of the prevailing cultural norms of the society they are serving. In other words, he tries to document the cultural basis of judicial decision—and discretion.

A most interesting approach indeed, and probably a true reflection of what actually happens, but not very convincing as being in the tradition of Islamic law. Law may well be part of the wider culture, as Rosen argues, but what about sacred law based on divine revelation? If the latter has for long been confined, as in the case of the Islamic *Sharia*, to dealing with matters of personal status—marriage, divorce, inheritance—what would "customary Islamic law" mean, or be?

The *Sharia*, the law of God, is the law of Islam applicable to all Muslims in the conduct of their religious and other affairs, so the conception of law in Islam is determined by the faithful grouped around the faith and governed by God. Law in the West, on the other hand, consists of legal norms approved by the people, and derives its authority from the reason and will of man, as well as from his moral nature. The Islamic conception is therefore quite different. If the chief and ruler of the Islamic community is God, law is His will. Submission to this law is both a social duty and a precept of faith; violating the law is not only an infringement of the legal order, but a sin.

[5] *The Anthropology of Justice: Law as Culture in Islamic Society*. By LAWRENCE ROSEN. Cambridge University Press, £22.50, paper £7.50.

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There is no distinction in Islamic law between the personal (or private) and the public. The *Sharia* prescribes everything man shall do to God, his neighbour and himself, but all this is couched in terms of religious duty. *Fiqh*—legal science or jurisprudence—is the knowledge of the rights and duties which enable man to observe right conduct in this world, while preparing himself for salvation in the next. Thus, although relations arising within a society are the proper domain of positive law, and *qadis* in Morocco may use judicial discretion that is based on the local culture's perception of fact, of right and wrong, and of the reality of human relations, they still have to contend with a conception of law and a legal order too closely tied to, if not wholly emanating from, a religious faith or belief.

Even where there are no codified strict rules of legal procedure for *qadis* to follow, thus allowing them to use their judicial discretion about evidence and procedure based on local culture (what Moroccans consider to constitute evidence), they can still refer to the Koran and to the codified corpus of prophetic Tradition as primary sources of Islamic law. The Prophet himself—who legislated for the Muslims by divine revelation but had no code by which to adjudicate between them—in the first community at Medina turned to the customary law and culture of the locality (i.e. the tribal one), and depended on oaths for evidence. After him, scholars of the sacred law developed *fiqh*, and became authoritative dispensers of judicial opinion *(fatwa)*. Roman law, too—vastly in use in the conquered territories—was gradually transformed into the rules of *istihsan* and *istislah*; that is, what is of benefit to the community, or of social utility. What is very much in line with Islamic legal science and culture is the emphasis on oaths and on the *status* of litigants and witnesses in the Sefrou courts.

Commendable as this uncommon and innovating study may be, one is left with the impression (actually, one reaches the conclusion) that court practice follows the tolerance of local culture so long as it is not contrary to the *Sharia*. I suspect that the author hoped to show that court practice is really the same everywhere, and that there is nothing special or peculiar about Islamic law, its *qadis*, and their courts. Here three reminders could be useful: (*1*) Theories of the Muslim or Islamic state hardly contemplated the possibility of Muslims living under the rule of unbelievers; (*2*) The extreme individualism of the Arabs as the first ruling class in early Islam knew no conception of law; (*3*) The jurisdiction of Islamic law has been deliberately and consistently narrowed down by Muslim rulers themselves over the last two centuries, in favour of the extension of the jurisdiction of adapted legal codes imported from the West, thus creating a legal dualism in most Muslim societies and undermining further the authority of the divine law. Such dualism contributes to the ferocity of the Muslim fundamentalists' attack on the erosion of things Muslim (including law and culture) by Western influences.

Rosen's work is an original and welcome contribution to the understanding of the apparent contradictions and peculiarities of Islamic society. One would wish for more studies of this nature and quality; and (short of actually ordering a moratorium) for fewer polemical tracts and general surveys.

Testing Times

The Good European Guide—By JOHN PINDER

OVER THIRTY YEARS AGO, in January 1959, a federalist Congress was held in Wiesbaden to discuss the future of Europe; it was addressed by such luminaries as Robert Schuman, Walter Hallstein, and Earl Attlee. Attlee, who led the British delegation, astounded the Continentals by saying what he had to say in five minutes flat. He also surprised them by saying that we must be ready to depart from old ideas of absolute national sovereignty and that he was a profound believer in world federalism. They were on more familiar British ground when he added that, although we British are "of Europe", some (including doubtless Attlee) "would say we are like a semi-detached home, partly in Europe and partly outside".

Among the participants who took a different view was one of the younger British Labour MPs, who was soon to write that Britain had no alternative but full membership of the European Community and to predict that, although this would not immediately be accepted, in the long run we would join. That we indeed did so owed much to his own courage in leading 68 other Labour MPs to vote in favour when the principle of entry was decided by the House of Commons in October 1971. By 1977, he was President of the European Commission; and now we have Roy Jenkins's diary[1] to tell us what life was like during his four years in that office.

European Diary 1977-1981 can be read for its sophisticated judgments on a remarkable range of subjects

[1] *European Diary 1977-1981*. By ROY JENKINS. Collins, £25.00.

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across a wide range of countries: architecture, literature, weather, travel, hotels, wine, food, to name a few—a sort of Good Everything Guide. Cathedrals range from "good" (Trier) to "quite good" (Barcelona); food from "very good" (as guest of the Court of Justice in Luxembourg) to "inedible" (Helmut Schmidt's Chancellery and, rather more surprisingly, a French Concorde flight); hotels from "a sort of very little Crillon . . . looking out on one of the three best squares in Europe" (in Nancy) to "a typical new hotel", with food indifferent, service slow, and windows that won't open and keep out the sun, if there is any, with tinted glass (in Luxembourg). But while there may be other guides to such things, apart from exotica such as the German Chancellery and French Concorde, this book gives a unique insight into the people and institutions that have been shaping Europe.

The people, too, cover a remarkable range, from European leaders (Helmut Schmidt, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Margaret Thatcher) and monarchs, through assorted overseas Presidents (from Carter to Mobutu, with whom Jenkins suffered a "peculiarly disagreeable lunch"), to innumerable British great and good—or, at a dinner party given by George Weidenfeld, "at least central and liberal". From such a rich seam you have to take what interests you most; and for me, that is the people who do something to move the Community in the direction of Union. Who are they? How do they do it? Who puts a spoke in the wheel and how? And how does Jenkins rate among them? For me, then, the diary is above all a Good European Guide, a help in evaluating the contributions of the *dramatis personae* in the uniting of Europe, and not least that of the author, whose performance can be judged from his response to a series of tests with which he was confronted.

Language is a problem for most British politicians in Europe. Jenkins faced it energetically: two hours' French before breakfast on a Saturday. But it was only after four months in Brussels that his French "jerked forward" to comfortable fluency, if not to the point where he could master the punch line of an ancedote. The importance of easy communication in at least one other language was shown by the Schmidt-Giscard relationship, conducted by both in fluent English, and on various occasions when political leaders who lacked English or French were in baulk during informal discussions in one or the other language.

Language reflects other cultural barriers; and Jenkins at first found the Brussels scene "almost gothically strange". Yet his first major political challenge was one which his professional skills as a senior British politician proved perfectly adapted to meet. The economic Summits of seven principal Western states had been attended by four members of the Community (Britain, France, Germany and Italy), but not by the five other members, nor by the Community as such, although it had the weight of a trading superpower. The five smaller member states and the Commission expected Jenkins to get there in order to represent the Community, and he would have lost his credibility had he failed to do so.

Here, as in many other matters, support from Italy and from the smaller members was not the problem. The Dutch said bluntly that Britain, which needed international financial support, would get none from the Netherlands if it opposed Commission representation. The difficulty was, as so often, the British and the French. In this matter Giscard d'Estaing, then President of France, was doing what he could to justify Mrs Thatcher's later opinion of him as "petulant, vain and ill-mannered", and less to deserve Roy Jenkins's reply to her that—granted these defects—Giscard was highly intelligent, and that on the whole his policies went in the right direction and did so effectively. But Giscard had convinced himself that the Summit was for sovereign governments. The Commission was not a sovereign government, so the Summit was not for the Commission. Helpfully for Giscard's case, the British reacted to the word sovereignty "with all the predictability of one of Pavlov's dogs". All therefore depended on the Federal Republic of Germany, along with Italy "one of the two big traditionally federalist European countries", and on Chancellor Schmidt, who though not a federalist could be relied upon to do business sensibly and reliably; and could sometimes do it boldly, when German interests could be identified with those of the Community.

THE RELATIONSHIP WITH Helmut Schmidt was crucial to Jenkins's success at the Commission. As a senior and highly professional politician, Jenkins could sustain serious conversation with him; and succeeded in doing so eight times in Bonn, with intimate discussions averaging more than two hours each, in addition to long phone calls and numerous other meetings. For his Test One, on the Summit, Jenkins saw that the key was to motivate Schmidt to persuade Giscard. At his crucial meeting with Schmidt in Bonn, Jenkins took care not to annoy by pressing, as everybody else was doing at the time, for German reflation, and was ready to help where he could—for example Schmidt's problematic relations with President Carter and his Administration. Schmidt prided himself, on the other hand, on his relationship with Giscard: "my friend", or even "my only friend", as he repeatedly said to Jenkins. Jenkins persuaded Schmidt to press Giscard to concede something; and when it came to the point, Giscard did agree that Jenkins (and therefore the Community) could take part in at least one of the sessions.

The French and the British continued to put petty obstacles on the course that led to the Summit. The Secretary General of the Elysée, no less, was despatched to see the British Ambassador in Paris about the "vital issue" of ensuring Jenkins's "non-presence" at the pre-Summit dinner and at some of the sessions. The British did in fact invite Jenkins to the dinner, but he was asked to arrive at 7.48 precisely and was placed at the bottom table. Then, to make as publicly explicit as possible the agreement that he could sit but not speak at the post-Summit press conference, they ensured that there was no microphone before Jenkins's place in the front row.

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All these efforts to keep the European Commission in its non-sovereign place were of little avail, because the host countries at subsequent Summits were soon treating the Commission President just like all the other Presidents and Prime Ministers. That did not discourage the British and French sticklers for protocol. The French were soon criticising the Commission for allowing François Mitterrand (then Leader of the Opposition) to see several Commissioners at once, instead of sequentially, when he visited the Commission; and the British Foreign Secretary circulated a memo instructing officials in the Foreign Office not to refer to our diarist as "President Jenkins". Nor, absurdly, did British protocol countenance the acceptance of foreign decorations, when Jenkins was offered them after his four years of service in the multinational Community.

For those trained in the hard school of British politics, surmounting petty obstacles as well as great ones is doubtless all in the day's work. The skills that Jenkins had learnt in London served him well in Brussels; and his standing as a most senior former Minister enabled him to talk to the other leading politicians on level terms and to carry through the heavyweight lobbying required to hoist Europe to the Summit. Having thus passed Test One, he was better placed to face Test Two: "moving Europe forward" towards monetary union.

THE QUESTION of the Summit was in the pipeline when Jenkins arrived in Brussels in 1977. But he wanted to do more than just respond to what was in the pipeline; he needed to find a theme "around which I could hope to move Europe forward". Giscard and Schmidt, who had been leading the Community, seemed to have lost impetus; and Jenkins recalled Jean Monnet's advice—to seek a new direction if the old ones appeared to be leading nowhere. After half a year in Brussels, the revival of the idea of monetary union, which had been on the shelf since the early 1970s, began to attract Jenkins's interest. By October 1977 he was ready to launch it, appropriately enough at his Jean Monnet Lecture at the European University Institute in Florence.

At first, his idea was covered with a wet blanket of scepticism. *The Economist* wrote that it was "A Bridge Too Far". Giscard was not sure that monetary union was practical. The President of the *Bundesbank* wanted to block it, and Schmidt was sceptical, even if "mildly benevolent". François Ortoli, the French Commissioner responsible for monetary affairs, was against shocking people with talk of qualitative leaps, preferring what Jenkins called a cautious shuffle. Only the federalists were enthusiastic. Jenkins had shown *vertù*. But what about *fortuna*—the circumstances in which the courage of *vertù* can flourish?

Fortuna came from the misfortunes of the dollar. In the four months from October 1977, it plunged by one tenth against the Mark; by the autumn of 1978 it was to fall by another tenth. The dollar was upsetting the German economy and threatening German exports. European

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integration was the best available stabiliser; and in February 1978, at another of their long discussions, Schmidt told Jenkins that he favoured a major step towards monetary union. Giscard, pointing this time in "the right direction", was not hard to persuade; and the establishment of the European Monetary System was decided during the German Presidency of the Community, in the second half of that year.

After the excitement of its launch, the EMS looked, in its first decade, much like the cautious shuffle that Jenkins had tried to avoid. But successful cooperation among the participants in the exchange rate mechanism (from which Britain has been notoriously absent) had laid the ground for a new phase in the monetary union story. First, the member states, including Britain, adopted economic and monetary union as a Community objective in the Single European Act; then the Heads of State and Government, including Mrs Thatcher, asked Jacques Delors to chair a committee to recommend steps by which it could be attained; and now there is a good chance that France, West Germany, and other member states will move forward to establish it, whether or not Mrs Thatcher stands aside.

All this was made possible by the EMS; the EMS was made possible by Schmidt; and Schmidt has said that his thinking on European monetary affairs, and indeed on European affairs in general, owed much to Roy Jenkins's influence. The same political skills, plus a determination to take the initiative with a bold idea, enabled Jenkins to "move Europe forward" and to pass Test Two with flying colours.

Back among the British, however, bold ideas were not well received. The reaction of the Treasury official responsible, when James Callaghan told him what Schmidt had proposed, was typical:

> "But it is very bold, Prime Minister. Did the Chancellor really go as far as that? It is very bold. It leaves the dollar to one side. I don't know what the Americans will say about it. It's very bold, Prime Minister."

Following their shock and annoyance at the French and Germans daring to make a bold proposal, British behaviour continued to follow a depressingly familiar pattern: the search for a quarter-way house; nerves about American reactions; hope that the Continentals would not have the courage to go ahead; ill-concealed gloating when the plan seemed likely to go off the rails; then gradual realisation that self-exclusion might have been a mistake, notwithstanding the continued reluctance to throw in our lot with the consumers of garlic and sauerkraut. It was, indeed, British behaviour that was to present Jenkins with Test Three.

CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT TOLD Jenkins in 1977, at their second meeting, that Continental colleagues blamed him for doing so much to bring Britain into the Community. Three decades earlier, Paul-Henri Spaak, bitterly disillusioned by the European policy of the post-War Labour Government, had hoped that the Conservatives would do better. A few months after they were returned to power in 1951, he was yet more bitterly disillusioned. Would the Conservative victory of 1979 repeat that pattern? Or could something better be expected?

When Jenkins visited Chequers, his car caught Dennis Thatcher's eye:

> ". . . that's a beautiful little Boche job you've got over there. I'd really rather have that; that's a real modern car . . . ."

European trade was evidently well viewed; but Dennis Thatcher's attitude to the European trading partners was old-fashioned, to say the least. A similar contradiction seemed to underlie his wife's erratic and often destructive performance in the Community, which presented Jenkins with Test Three: averting disaster over the budget.

Britain's complaint about the inequitable British share of the Community budget was in itself justified. Mrs Thatcher's peculiar contribution was to cause it to dominate European affairs for a tedious five years, to the detriment of the Community's capacity to deal with more important things. Jenkins quickly detected her lack of tactical sense—which boded ill for an early settlement. The person whose help she needed most was, again, Helmut Schmidt; yet he was the first with whom she picked a quarrel in the European Council.

THIS MERELY reflected a deeper problem: her inability to understand how things look to the partners caused a series of eruptions when the subject was discussed at the meeting of the various heads of government at the European Council in Dublin in November 1979. There were two explosive rows with her advisers, doubtless on how the partners could best be approached; then four hours over the dinner table with those partners, incessantly repeating minor variations on the theme of "my money back"; and finally a promise extracted from her to approach the next meeting, in Luxembourg, in a "spirit of genuine compromise". Those words came out "with almost physical difficulty", although, Jenkins thought at the time, "given her character they had meaning none the less". Her European partners, however, must have wondered at Luxembourg exactly what that meaning was, when she turned down the offer which has in fact provided the basis of the settlement that has now lasted for almost a decade. Virtually the same deal was put together again, with cosmetic changes, by the Foreign Ministers and the Commission a few weeks later, after a continuous eighteen-hour session—all that trouble, caused as Jenkins put it, by "a foolish woman's stubborn whim".

Had that been the end of the affair it could have been decently forgotten, even though the short shelf-life for undertakings given to Community partners might have been seen as a dangerous precedent. But Mrs Thatcher managed to keep the pot boiling for another four years, for a result that could have been achieved sooner and with much less damage to the Community's capacity to act in other directions. The same approach may now be leading to another period of disruption, with monetary union and social policy at the centre of a web of needless quarrels. But this time the partners, once bitten, are more

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likely to react to any such intransigence by proceeding without, for the moment, such an uncomprehending and cantankerous passenger.

THE COST TO THE Community of Mrs Thatcher's disruptive behaviour over the Community budget was that it failed to focus, for five critical years, on such vital questions as East-West relations and the competitiveness of European industry. The cost to Britain was a further period as a marginal member of a Community led by France and Germany. Roy Jenkins's efforts to engineer a solution also clouded his fourth and last year in Brussels. Not only did he have to give "total priority" to this through the first half of 1981, but it also got him cornered, within the Commission, in a minority of two (with the other British Commissioner, Christopher Tugendhat) in defending a settlement that the British Government would accept. Thanks to Mrs Thatcher's intransigence and the atmosphere it generated, this looked to their colleagues like support for a narrow "national interest", thus endangering confidence that the President was continuing to put the common interest first.

Outside the Commission, suspicion that Jenkins was bowing to nationalist pressure was rife: not just in France, where a stark view of British national egoism is endemic, but also in Belgium, whose Foreign Minister told Jenkins that, with Britain and the rest of the Community so far apart, it would no longer be possible for Belgium to sustain its efforts to nominate him as President for a further term. Jenkins would not, as it happened, have been likely to accept. But the change in the Belgian attitude was a symptom of the damage that Mrs Thatcher had done to mutual trust, and to the trust in the Commission's impartiality which is essential to the proper functioning of the Community.

Roy Jenkins concluded, after a long but "rather wild and whirling interview" with Mrs Thatcher, at which she was not "making a great deal of sense", that her reputation for having a well-ordered mind was not justified. The disorder in her thoughts about the Community may have been due to a lack of any intellectual framework within which to respond to the historic challenge of interdependence and of the new way that Europeans have found of living together. A reductionist view of free trade is not enough. Jenkins found her "with little desire to look forward and discuss the European future". Given her limitations, the fact that an answer was found to the budget question is to the credit of the Community; and in playing a significant part in finding it, Roy Jenkins again came with credit through a difficult and aggravating test.

In the early days of the budget row, Chancellor Schmidt told Jenkins that Mrs Thatcher must compromise or "she would be in great trouble". But, at least in the short term, Schmidt had the wrong end of the stick: it was the Community rather than Mrs Thatcher that was in for a difficult time. Where its decisions are taken by unanimous agreement, the Community can be disrupted by one recalcitrant government. There may be few sanctions against such governments in the short term. The consequences may be felt, rather, over the longer term, as the intransigent partner is left out of those informal coalitions that determine the direction in which the Community moves, and may eventually be relegated to the second rank in a "two-speed" Community.

The bear garden in Dublin in 1979 had shown the vulnerability of the European Council, which had always decided by unanimity, to disruption by one Prime Minister. In Milan, in June 1985, the patience of her partners ran out and the European Council for the first time voted by majority to convene, against Mrs Thatcher's opposition, the intergovernmental conference that drew up the Single European Act—without which the Community would still be languishing in the doldrums of the preceding years. But although these meetings are capable of taking important decisions, the functioning of the Community has to depend on the much more frequent meetings of Councils of Ministers, who dispose of most of the legislative and much of the executive power.

While Jenkins seems to have appreciated some of the fairly small and informal meetings of the European Council, he was quite caustic about the Council of Ministers (to which each country sends the Minister appropriate to the subject under discussion), with "up to three hundred people present in the huge room, talking . . . as though across an empty football pitch". It is hardly surprising if the results of enacting a large body of legislation through such diplomatic negotiations, after seeking intergovernmental unanimity, are not always satisfactory; and Jenkins had cause to castigate the Council for its "foolishness and chaos" over the Community's agricultural budget. But of course the Ministers, with their brief visits, have to rely on their officials to do most of the intergovernmental work; and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (COREPER) which organises this work through a labyrinth of subordinate committees attracted Jenkins's particular scorn: "bitty, lacking any leadership", and "an increasingly hopeless body, almost guaranteed to seize the wrong end of any stick".

THE FAULT does not lie with the officials. Many are able people, some outstandingly so. The fault is in the system which places such a weight of both legislating and governance on an intergovernmental institution: on treating the Community as an arena for diplomacy, not as a nascent polity. Of course, legislation and its execution are inherently more difficult in an emerging multinational polity such as the Community than in most established nation-states. But Jenkins's experience with the Commission and the European Parliament indicates that these difficulties could be better overcome if these two bodies were given some of the power that is now almost monopolised by the Council of Ministers and COREPER.

People and institutions have to watch their step if they are not to cross Roy Jenkins's boredom threshold, and his colleagues in the Commission were no exception. Yet he does seem to have found them not only friendly and decent, but also a fairly effective body. The transition from Whitehall with its well-oiled routine to the multinational staff that works for the Commission did not pass

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without comment: official papers arriving at the last minute, sometimes in a mess; an unnecessary meeting on a Saturday. But frustrations caused by the Commission were insignificant compared with those caused by COREPER and the Council of Ministers. Those who rant against "Brussels bureaucrats" could see, from this diary, that their target should in fact be the congeries of officials from member states in the maze of committees under COREPER, not the relatively innocent Commission.

AFTER THE FIRST European elections in 1979, Roy Jenkins became enthusiastic about the European Parliament. The new Parliament "was a great advantage, showed its strength and muscle and improved the quality of Europe". During the budget crisis at the end of that year, when Jenkins thought the Council foolish and chaotic, he found that the Parliament was already performing impressively, and looked forward to the time when a majority of Members of the European Parliament could unite with a group of governments in the Council to get control over agricultural expenditure.

Jenkins may be predisposed in favour of European institutions. But he is not tolerant of inefficiency and muddle. His preference for the Commission and the European Parliament over the Council of Ministers and COREPER confirms the commonsense view that a quasi-monopoly of power in the hands of intergovernmental bodies, usually striving for unanimity, is no way to run a polity. So Jenkins passes the test of preferring the more democratic to the more bureaucratic institutions, and, among bureaucracies, of distinguishing between the better and the worse.

WHEN CONTINENTALS come up with a new idea for the Community, the British Government's predictable reaction is that we must be practical and realistic—which, being interpreted, means that we must reject new ideas and stick to current British policy, at present reductionist and laissez-faire. If, because other countries are ready to proceed without British agreement, the new idea cannot be stopped in its tracks, Britain usually climbs on board—after, as Jenkins puts it, the best seats are already occupied. Such behaviour caused Jean Monnet to conclude that the British will not grasp an idea but will recognise a fact, implying that it is up to the others to create the facts for the British to recognise.

While the British are by no means generally bereft of ideas, Monnet was right to observe that they had failed to produce them in the politics of contemporary Europe. The climate of British politics has not stimulated the creative imagination in this direction. Roy Jenkins provided an exception when he latched on to the idea of monetary union while it was generally viewed as unrealistic, and thus initiated the European Monetary System. But he did not follow this innovation with any comparable initiative during the second half of his term of office. Much of his time was, to be sure, taken up with the British budget quarrel. But at the annual summer meeting of his personal staff in 1979, before the quarrel had flared up, the questions of long-run policy were relegated to a rapid, unfocused run-through when time had almost run out.

Despite Jenkins's commitment and goodwill towards Europe, he seems to have lacked a sufficiently structured idea of the future of the Community to lead him on from his first creative thought to others in the same vein. The environment of British politics in which he had worked for three decades had hardly conduced to this. British politics may also have been to blame in another sense; for, by the beginning of his last year in Brussels, thoughts of his future action in Britain had come to occupy his mind; and by the second half of the year, it was on the foundation of what was to be the Social Democratic Party that his creative thinking was engaged. It was back to the cocoon or, as he put it, the nutshell of British politics.

Even if one of the aims was to help Britain break out of its shell, his capacity to innovate in the Community was none the less reduced. He had a certain idea of Europe, or he would neither have had the courage to stand and fight over British accession nor have understood the significance of monetary union. But his idea was not strong enough to prevail against the pull of politics at home. If he passes the fifth test, on the quality of his idea of Europe, it is with less distinction than the other four.

In "the Good European Guide", then, Jenkins surely rates four stars, in a Europe in which only a few post-War statesmen have rated five. Coming from the hitherto infertile soil of Britain's contemporary political culture, this was a remarkable achievement. His diary helps one to understand the how and the why—as well as being a civilised read on a variety of other subjects.

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Books Encountered

Palace of Varieties: An Insider's View of Westminster. By JULIAN CRITCHLEY. John Murray, £13.95.

Frivolous-seeming, amusing, but shrewd account of an MP's life by the plump, pro-European gadfly whose wit and indiscretion have probably debarred him from future office yet made him a delightful "character" and columnist. E.g.: "Nigel Lawson is Reggie Maudling but without Mr Poulson's swimming-pool."

Don't You Know There's a War On? The People's Voice 1939-45. By JONATHAN CROALL. Hutchinson Radius, £8.95.

An anthology of 35 oral reminiscences by survivors from "the Home Front"—wives, mothers, children, teachers, ARP wardens, dissidents, pacifists, factory workers, etc.; plus evocative reprints of wartime advertisements, announcements, documents, ration books, clothing books, and so on.

The Greatest Treason: The Bizarre Story of Hollis, Liddell and Mountbatten. By RICHARD DEACON. Century, £12.95.

Another trot round the "Was Roger Hollis a spy?" obstacle course, defending Hollis fairly plausibly, less plausibly fingering Liddell, and utterly unconvincingly accusing Mountbatten, not just of flamboyance, vanity, goodwill, and naivety, but of passing secrets to the USSR. The "evidence"? Gossip and smears, mainly from an ex-CIA source here code-named "Poe". Mystery and imagination indeed.

Testimonies: Selected Shorter Prose 1950-1987. By MICHAEL HAMBURGER. Carcanet, £18.95.

A delightful collection. Music, poetry, translation, people: Hamburger illuminates them all. Leading writers considered include Yeats, Rilke, Joyce, Karl Kraus, Kafka, T. S. Eliot, Beckett, Günter Grass, Celan, Uwe Johnson, Basil Bunting, and Larkin, who in a letter here describes his *persona* as "the Gerald Nabarro of poetry".

Philip Larkin, the Marvell Press and Me. By JEAN HARTLEY. Carcanet, £12.95.

The subjects in the title should be in reverse order, preceded perhaps by "Hull". For this is really a pluckily jaunty autobiography: acquiring self-education, running a shoe-string press, leaving the husband with whom it began, and publishing, knowing, and finally mourning Larkin. Good photographs, uncertain tone.

After Thatcher. By PAUL HIRST. Collins, £7.99.

Slightly premature title, both for the book and for the foreseeable future; but a stimulating analysis of the vices (and virtues) of Mrs T., and a double-headed critique of both Thatcherism and Socialism. Professor Hirst favours a mixed economy, devolution, federalism, and electoral reform. *Quelle ambition!*

The Book of London. Edited by MICHAEL LEAPMAN. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £18.00.

Bravo for not pricing this at £17.99. A sumptuously illustrated, well-informed blend of history, survey, guide, and portrait, with Elizabeth Longford and Gavin Stamp among its 27 contributors. The sections include "Areas", living, working, enjoyment, "makers"; the concise text leaves one wanting more.

The Dialogic Novels of Malcolm Bradbury and David Lodge. By ROBERT A. MORACE. Southern Illinois University Press, $24.95, £16.20.

Lodge Bradbury, of course, is a chunky US academic domiciled at ivy-clad Bradbury Lodge. Professor Morace's book may add to the confusion of two rather different writers, and his approach via Bakhtin's "dialogism" theory may get him into "Pseud's Corner"; but his analyses are shrewder than his obeisances to academe.

A Careless Widow and Other Stories. By V. S. PRITCHETT. Chatto & Windus, £12.95.

Another marvellous late bonus: six more stories from masterly Sir Victor—full of the sharp observation, rueful acceptance of our condition, and unquenchable amusement at it, that pervade all his work. Huge quarry inhabit these small but very deep pools: only he can bring them so well to the surface.

The Intelligence Game: The Illusions and Delusions of International Espionage. By JAMES RUSBRIDGER. The Bodley Head, £12.95.

Genially disabused overview of the now rather overlit twilight world, with much emphasis on mythomania, and some well-documented accounts of snafus such as Operation Gold. Takes a dim view of Wright and Pincher, largely ignores "Deacon", finds "West" accurate but dull, calls for more accountability.

On the Look-out: A Partial Autobiography. By C. H. SISSON. Carcanet, £14.95.

A *backwards* autobiography, really, since it works by flashback and jump-cut association, notably between events and consequent poems. Although written at longish intervals, its four parts (on civil servant, squaddie, student, child) make a strict and impressive portrait of a fine, tough-minded thinker and writer.

London before the Blitz. By RICHARD TRENCH. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £14.95.

Slightly misleading title, since the story includes the bombed fate of many of the City nooks, crannies, and buildings nostalgically described in eight walks centred on St Paul's. The photographs, perforce monochrome, look rather disappointing, partly because many show blitzed rubble. But a good record.

Journals 1939-1977. By KEITH VAUGHAN. John Murray, £17.95.

Poignant, sensitive, frank, and intelligent. This selection is less than a quarter of the original 62 notebooks; but printed as a whole it makes greater impact than, separately, the 1966 selection from 1939 to 1965 or the later excerpts published in 1983 in *The London Magazine*. Powerful talent and fame on one side; on the other, pain, loneliness, often transient homosexual lovers, self-doubt, drink, cancer, and a dignified overdose.

The Ultra Spy. By F. W. WINTERBOTHAM. Macmillan, £12.95.

Discreet, impressionistic autobiography by the author of the pioneering if slightly haphazard first account of Bletchley's wartime decryption, *The Ultra Connection*. Now 93, the author tells a teeming tale: a schoolboy in England and the Empire before 1914; a volunteer soldier at 17; a pilot in the RFC; a POW; a farmer; an MI6 agent. Plus meeting Hitler; working with Churchill; four marriages; three books.

The Rise and Fall of Fleet Street. By CHARLES WINTOUR. Hutchinson, £16.95.

Brisk, personal, and well-illustrated history-through-biographical-portraits, from Northcliffe to Conrad Black, Eddy Shah, and Rupert Murdoch. The portraiture is vivid and first-hand; so are the anecdotes, the statistics, and the colourful accounts of union abuses in pre-Wapping and pre-Docklands nights.

R.M.

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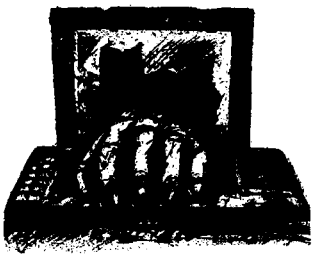
The Information Revolution

Human Ideas & Electrical Impulses—By LEONARD R. SUSSMAN

"Only as men are brought into counsel, and state their own needs and interests, can the general interests of a great people be compounded into a policy suitable to all. So, at this opening of a new age, in this its day of unrest and discontent, it is our part to clear the air, to bring about common counsel; to set up the parliament of the people."

Woodrow Wilson (1912)



THE PRESS IS A metaphor for *all* forms of delivering information and transmitting ideas to and from the people. In the 1990s and the century beyond, the technologies of communication will serve to enlarge human freedom everywhere, to create inevitably a counsel of the people, if not the voting parliament which Woodrow Wilson foresaw. Directly ahead is the creation of the Integrated Systems of Digital Networks. ISDN will provide diverse kinds of information and varied forms of delivery such as we can now begin to imagine, and, imagining, create.

Nearly every man and woman on earth will be able to communicate in a few moments with someone continents away. Everyone will have immediate access, at home or at the workplace, or through a nearby communal telephone, to a vast volume of diverse information—a volume such as even the world's finest libraries or news services cannot provide today. The cultures of even the smallest, least familiar peoples will be preserved, and made accessible to everyone, everywhere. New communications technologies will induce the human mind to think more clearly, to test new possibilities, to gain confidence and even exhilaration from the process of idea-discovery. Perhaps most responsive to President Wilson's dream, people now silent will have their voices heard. Whether this serves to create a parliament of the people will remain a political determination. But so pervasive will communications become, accessible to all, that the technology will tend to overcome political restrictions.

Since the first written word appeared, however, freedom has often succumbed to state power. That power has strictly controlled communications. In the new era, there will be voice and picture linkage to virtually every living person—and interaction between sender and receiver. Will the new systems avoid censorious state controls? At the outset, that will depend on whether the new communications linkages are put in place by believers in democratic communications. Political democrats can assure the free flow of information. The democratic communicators are not likely to be primarily ideologues on the side of political freedom. They may well be inventors and entrepreneurs who profit from the opportunities of a relatively free market, and from the political system that makes possible individual risk-taking and small-scale inventiveness—two major aspects of technological development in a free society. Major communications developments these days come from small, creative risk-takers, not large, sluggish corporations.

SOME CORPORATE fears may stimulate greater American inventiveness and productivity. The current assumption that US electronics are inescapably second to Japanese technology, particularly in the crucial field of High-Definition Television, may be overcome by US creators spurting ahead, leapfrogging to produce HDTV via the Integrated Systems of Digital Networks. HDTV is the key to many industrial advances beyond the field of television entertainment. The digital networks of ISDN may replace the vaunted analogue or voltage systems of HDTV, in which the Japanese presently lead in research and development. By developing "smarter" computer chips based on binary digits rather than voltage changes, and carried entirely by fibre optic cable rather than less certain broadcast transmissions, US technology may bypass even the still-to-be-perfected Japanese analogue (voltage) HDTV systems. The integrated systems of ISDN are carriers of data, voice and pictures over networks linked to other networks.

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Technologists, too, will influence the freeness of the flow. The new technologies will have their own momentum, even in less-than-democratic societies. Leaders in the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China now recognise that their social, economic and educational systems must be revolutionised, not just reformed, if their peoples are to avoid bankruptcy and their political systems not succumb to crucial challenges. The core of the problem and the key to its solution is the need to computerise information, make it accessible to the broad public, and put hundreds of millions to work in the post-industrial information era.

THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES have also come to this realisation. They demanded an amorphous "new world information and communication order". That demand was based on two premises. *(1)* A few Western countries today determine the content of the world's information flow; and *(2)* with vast, new communications linkages Third World news and views will be even more completely overwhelmed. But recognition is also slowly gaining in the Third World that past panaceas have failed to develop the economies of the new nations, let alone feed, clothe or house their peoples. Consequently, these nations are perilously unstable, and their political futures uncertain.

In scores of Third World countries after World War II, decolonialisation and self-determination did not automatically produce the promised viable governments and humane political systems; quite the opposite. Early Western theorists predicted that economic development would lead to freer, democratic governance and more stable societies. After four decades, that has not happened in most of these countries, though they received billions in loans and grants. Nor, as was forecast by others, has utopian ideology generated either substantial development or political freedom. For diverse reasons, Third World authoritarians harshly restricted or censored the flow of information to, from, and within their countries. But this, like other panaceas, has not advanced social or economic development, or enhanced citizens' political rights.

THE COMMUNICATIONS REVOLUTION is not a panacea. It is becoming a reality, with fresh potentials anticipated every day. In the waning years of this millennium, that new source of idea-power—the new technology of communications—is beginning to alter every form of human relationship and activity. This technology, like older forms, has the potential to enhance or constrain human freedom. But there is a major difference: the new communications tools are technologies of scale and diversity. Their very variety, number and speed defy the controller who would ban or censor from a central point. Censors in the past relied on central control of the medium (the printing house or broadcast studio) to inhibit dissent or diversity. Control was secured from the centre, from which spokes of information radiated to the periphery. The new communications technologies need no "centre". The new instruments are linked at the periphery as well as the centre, often bypassing the centre. Networks of information join other networks at a speed beyond the capacity of the human mind to monitor before a message has been delivered. And then it is unlikely that the centre will know that the message has been conveyed.

The new technologies are the conduit for generating vast information-power. Almost simultaneously, world-wide, they convey, store or retrieve current speech, text, data or pictures, and information from all of human history. They also facilitate problem-solving in all human disciplines: convey news and information needed to determine governmental policies as well as citizen judgments; broaden the scope of scientific investigation and the development of still newer technologies; enable questioners to confirm data, verify policies, and cross-check information instantaneously; widen the horizon of individuals through far greater cultural and educational opportunities; enable men and (finally in many societies) women to examine shared problems from diverse cultural, historical and political traditions and encourage the user to develop greater electronic literacy and the power of logical thinking.

The new communications technologies are still only imperfectly understood, even in highly industrialised countries. Video games that attracted American youth in the early 1970s helped prepare today's university students for elaborate gambits in computer logic. Today, the Japanese video games called *Nintendo* are present in many homes of eighteen-year-old males in the US. Some spend four hours a day at these games. In Tokyo, young men wait in street lines for twenty hours to buy the latest video game.

By mastering intricacies of the computer, we train our biologic brains to think. And perhaps one day we will programme the computer to develop artificial intelligence. We can only do so after we understand ourselves better. Meanwhile, that same machine presses us to ponder alternatives for human survival on an increasingly problem-strewn planet.

The common instruments of "information power" are the telephone and telefax, the computer and its value-added terminal, the television and VCR, domestic and cross-border radio, the recorder and the copier, and the fibre optic cable and satellite dish. Combining these instruments produces seeming miracles. A high-speed computer in London linked by satellites and telephone to a terminal enables Manila to call up a manuscript in the Library of Congress. All the books in that great library can be stored in a computer no larger than a home refrigerator. Every eight years, it is now estimated, computer science doubles the entire volume of information available to all humans everywhere.

THERE ARE RESTRAINTS to linear progress. National security will provide some valid, but mostly invalid, reasons for limiting access to information. Proprietary interests of writers and publishers will create copyright controls. Professionals in science and other fields will similarly want to patent their developments. A new set of legal protections will be needed to guard the privacy of individuals as well as the security of their property. And Third World leaders must be persuaded

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that their fragile cultures will not be overwhelmed by the pervasive new communications flow.

Some fears are well founded. In the Age of Integrated Systems of Digital Networks—the network of networks—computer literacy will be even more important for the individual's lifetime development than ordinary reading capability in the age of books and newspapers. Indeed, the distribution of computer terminals, in itself, can be a democratising force in every country. But the withholding of terminals, as many authoritarians today deny their citizens access to telephones, will inhibit such democratic potential. In many places, the cost of installing terminals will result in uneven access to the new world of information.

This revolutionary information era is not the "New World Information and Communication Order" imprecisely but vociferously demanded at UNESCO meetings for more than a decade. The new era is not ordered. If anything, it will be disorderly, as befits a democratic mode. It will provide "small" communications technologies so that even the most distant, the poorest, the least heard peoples and cultures can be brought readily on line and received anywhere in the world. All will be able to interact. Small domestic networks will link rural areas to urban centres. These will connect with the centres and peripheries of neighbouring states; and these, in turn, with the most distant places. All networks will have access to a vast array of choices provided by all other networks in the linkage. Perhaps 30 or 40 years hence the world-wide network of networks will be in place. The early phase of the Age of ISDN is already operative.

SOME FEAR IT AS TOO mechanistic. They confuse the information revolution with automation or robotics. But humans need not be enslaved by information machines. Other humans are the traditional slave-masters. The censors world-wide are redblooded humans. They short-circuit today's information technology in order to restrict the power of the non-governmental news and information media. Communications technology transmits human ideas. Electrical impulses are idea-neutral.

Others, particularly in the Third World, envision ISDN as the ultimate denial of information diversity by its ability to tie together vast national and international networks. This reflects the fear that a few Western entrepreneurs will dominate the electronic networks. Yet the very nature of the diverse linkage should enable Third World voices to be heard, as they are not now.

Perhaps the most compelling fear is expressed by those who foresee an Orwellian conclusion: a political tragedy on a vast scale. An élite in one country or several would come to dominate not only the mass media, but the masses as well. Ironically, however, the Marxist-Leninists who have crudely dominated their societies for up to 70 years now fear the introduction of new communications technologies into their countries. This fear is based partly on the linkage to free-enterprise systems overseas, and the attraction this may have for citizens of "socialist" countries. But mainly the Marxist fear is based on the democratising nature of the new communications technologies, and the implication of this for sharing future control in their own society. There is validity to this Marxist fear. Democratic systems are based on real choices for citizens. The new technologies provide a diversity of communications systems, and of varied news, data and information within those systems. Such variety is bound to alter the political and economic landscape, as well as the policies and persona of the political leadership.

The technology also provides for heightened interaction between the user and the sender—a democratising force to be feared by the authoritarian. On a more profound level, the magnification of sources and volume of information must inevitably raise new questions about the nature of the society and the role of information in all aspects of life, including governance.

In all societies, the new communications tools are ending the false separation between technology and other aspects of human intercourse: culture, general education, domestic politics and geopolitics. Communications technology influences the imagination, and therefore all forms of human endeavour. It is a pervasive social process. There are no guarantees that technology *per se* will democratise the society. Some technologies support and some undermine democracy. The test is whether communications technologies provide diverse contents, can readily meet changing needs of the users, and are inexpensive, permitting wide distribution. Lewis Mumford warned that "those who are concerned with maintaining democratic institutions" must ensure that their efforts "include technology itself".[1] This is in the early American tradition. Benjamin Franklin spoke of the interdependence of philosophy, democracy, and technology. That concept was never more appropriate than in assessing the broad social implications of the new communications technologies for all societies. While the communications revolution was still in its infancy, there were both intellectual scoffers and supporters. Several have exchanged positions from being unfriendly to friendly to technology, and vice versa.

SINCE THE PRINTING OF the Gutenberg Bible, political élites have feared each new information system. For ages, books were kept out of the hands of peasants lest they get revolutionary ideas. When they were permitted to read, their texts were carefully censored. Mass printing has never produced a revolution, nor did it create Nazism, Fascism, or Communism. Guns and political cruelty produced all three, aided afterward by the propaganda channels of the totalitarians. It is far more likely that the explosive diversity of the new communications technologies will prepare the way for democratic governance.

There are likely to be systems within systems. Radio has become far more diversified since television entered most American homes. Today, 188 million Americans listen to 505 million radio sets and more than 10,000 radio broadcasters. Cable TV provides news, information and entertainment not generally found on the large television networks or affiliates. VCRs offer classical film, documentaries and other subjects not regularly provided on cable or TV networks.

[1] Lewis Mumford, "Authoritative and Democratic Technics", *Technology and Culture*, no. 5 (Winter 1964), p. 7.

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Computer terminals carry a myriad of news and information: statistical data, encyclopaedic references, journalistic archives, current and past financial information, and much more. Future terminals will carry print-outs and videotext of Third World news, information and cultural offerings now available only in distant lands. All of this provides information-on-demand. The individual user becomes the centre, not a speck on the periphery. The mind of the singular man or woman can roam distant horizons, not only of geography but of meanings and potentials. Most important, he can interact. He can express himself, and respond to others. He can even move back in time and space, and find new perspectives for himself and his future. He can become active, rather than simply reactive (far different from the couch potato tuning only to tonight's entertainment fare). There will, indeed, still be the Rambos for those who seek them. But there will be much, much more. More than we can even envision as the Age of ISDN opens.

We may even see the end of ideology, as Daniel Bell predicted somewhat prematurely in 1960. Marxism began foundering in the Soviet Union decades before Gorbachov's appearance, but *glasnost* provided the *coup de grâce*. Ideologies of whatever stripe are subverted by idea diversity and interaction among the citizenry, and the structure of quest and analysis which the new communications technologies establish. This alone will not produce a democratic society, but it will provide the structure for political forces to create one.

Nor will these technologies in themselves guarantee that a nation already democratic will support the democratisation of the world's cultures. The availability of limitless film, news and information from the Third World cannot assure the calling up of this rich assortment on the terminals of the industrialised nations. With easy access to this world of diversity, however, new interests can readily develop in the Age of ISDN. No utopian era is promised. At least, wherever in the world a telephone line runs, or shortwave radio is accessible—almost everywhere by 2050—global citizens can acquire some greater sense of interdependence. But first political will must permit the linkages.

A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY is not a slumbering, undisturbed aggregation. It is vibrant, testing, even tense. The tension comes from the testing of the possibilities, even the limits, of law and custom. Out of that, perhaps, comes new law, new custom. Certainly in an age of vast change, such as communications technologies provide, there must be regular testing. The miniaturisation of voice and data carriers opens new vistas for transmitting knowledge—and for unwanted surveillance. The networking of information makes possible both highly centralised and infinitely decentralised switching points—control points, if one is authoritarian; free-flow points, if libertarian. The technologies will not solve political problems. They will create new ones. But for the first time in history the great interlinks will make possible the empowering of entire publics through access to diverse information systems. It will take political will to allow such democratisation to happen.

If and when it does occur, the censors will be overwhelmed, and finally made superfluous. In the great array of information made available at the touch of a keyboard or a telephone, the primitive concept of press controls and other information blockages will be seen for what they already are: anachronistic. They have an ancient, if not honourable history. Censorship began in Germany in 1529. A half-century later in England the infamous Star Chamber restricted printing rights to certain presses. They did this in order to prevent "greate enormities and abuses" practised by "dyvers contentyous and disorderlye persons professinge the arte or mystere of Printinge or sellinge of bookes".[2] We may be seeing the last massive gasp of the public censors. When 38 journalists are killed in one year, as in 1988, hundreds more arrested, and still larger numbers harassed, as they were; when political systems in three-quarters of the nations of the world are still afraid of what their citizens may read, see, or hear—as they are—the race toward the democratisation of communication is far from over.

But it is quite possible that this is, indeed, the last great surge. And with ISDN perhaps 40 years away, we can be optimistic, even as we are realistic about today's plague of censorious nations. No nation, not even the most democratic, with the freest press in history, is free of the tensions which information power stimulates when it challenges state power.

In a democratic society, there are irresponsible journalists and corrupt officials. Both rend the democratic fabric. Inevitably, some will seek legislative or administrative remedies. Often these will not be necessary. Public rejection of journalistic sensationalism, and more vigilant monitoring of officials will be sufficient to avoid further damage—until other aberrations occur. And they will, in a free society. They can be minimised. Yet the freedom of the press cannot be absolute. No political or civil right can be absolutely granted in a democratic society. There are slippery slopes at every important crossroads. In the clash of rights—free press *v.* fair trial, for example—a winner one day in court may be a loser next time. The law and the judge are the mediators. Journalists win some, when they invoke shield laws to protect themselves from revealing sources of information. But sometimes it is more important to protect a defendant than to support a journalist's credibility with his source, important as it is to support the public's right to know next time.

US journalists losing such decisions often claim a "chilling" attack on their First Amendment rights. They feel they are sliding down the slippery slope. But many fail-safe guards protect the press before it is truly hampered. Indeed, during a normal clash of rights it can be damaging to cry "Emergency".

Even during the Reagan years, when the US Administration sought to stop official leaks and reduced access to government documents under the Freedom of Information Act, no serious reduction in press freedom occurred. There was anti-conservative bias and anti-administration commentary, along with approval of "the Great Communicator" by those in the media who favoured the President. The Administration was also attacked for its information restric-

[2] Decree of 1586, quoted in John Shelton Laurence and Bernard Timberg, *Fair Use and Free Inquiry* (1980).

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tion policies. Some administrative restrictions were posed and not put in place. Others were only minimally applied. The tension between independent information power-wielders and the state minimised the controls.

The world is witnessing changes recorded with similar impact only twice since man first walked the earth: the agricultural and industrial revolutions. No one can predict where the new changes—the information revolution—will lead. That they will alter every aspect of human relationship is certain.

Domination of the information channels by television dramatically assisted the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s, altered the presidential political process in the 1970s, popularised hospices, malpractice suits, feminism, and the plight of the homeless in the 1980s. Significant social change is already attributable to the pervasiveness of the electronic media. And we are just at the beginning of such social change. Indeed, the new media may transform the home and office by the information products they make accessible. A new social environment may be developed. The individual personality, too, may be altered by the seemingly limitless choices the new media provide, and the process of selection and testing that this implies. The impact will vary from country to country, and from class to class, different for the highly educated and the illiterate, but a significant change for both. As each has access to a similar keyboard, however, the dividing lines between them will blur and eventually diminish. It is highly unlikely that, once installed, the new information systems can ever again become segregated.

The information revolution is already producing the key technologies for the age of ISDN, some 40 years off. That has the capability of providing, for the first time in human history, the democratisation of information. ISDN represents not only the interlocking deployment of all manner of communications services, but the empowering of the individual through access to communications; a giant step toward the democratisation of politics and governance, toward human freedom.

When universal linkage in a politically free country occurs it is likely that the information flow will be expanded to include data and services not previously believed of general interest. This may include services of special use to the urban and rural poor—the updating of services, for example, that have been widely disseminated since the US government dispatched county agents to teach farming and health practices in the 19th century. Some of these programmes, for urban and rural dwellers, and based on the most advanced late 20th-century practices, will be immediately useful in many Third World countries. At that stage, perhaps some years after ISDN is already universally available in the politically free industrialised states, the leaders of developing countries will begin to drop their resistance to tying into ISDN.

Third World resistance will be based on the assumption that the flows of information will be principally oriented to Western interests, and to the style of governance in Western democratic societies. Indeed, since some of the first "universal" linkages will appear in North America, Western Europe and Japan, this assumption has some validity. But it would be self-defeating for Third World leaders to hold their citizens aloof from the earliest possible ISDN linkage. For it will be a two-way channel. The sooner developing countries permit their people to participate, the earlier will the cultures, the news, the development process of the Third World become known and accessible to more than five billion inhabitants of the planet. It is likely, therefore, that the more politically democratic developing countries will take the lead—Costa Rica and Barbados, for example—having as models recently developed South Korea and Taiwan. As all such countries join ISDN, the worldwide information flows will change. As current data, cultural elements, news and histories of these countries are added to the flows, Third World interests and accessions of information will broaden the data bases of all users.

So far I have assumed that the democratic and democratically-inclined states—developed and developing—will be among the earliest large users of ISDN. Whatever the time period needed for this development, it is likely that the less-free states will be experimenting with growing but still largely restrictive use of ISDN, domestically and internationally. Indeed, it seems probable that even highly restrictive societies, using the Soviet Union as an example, will begin to link their specialised citizens to international news and data flows. Control will be maintained initially by permitting only a single "gateway" for all computerised data entering the USSR. Most of the flow comes from the United States through the San Francisco-Moscow teleport; a second link goes through Vienna.

For many years, a small élite in the Kremlin has had access to some highly secret daily Tass news bulletins specially prepared for them and no other citizens. Tass produced for this élite a relatively objective report of the world. That circle has probably been expanded under Gorbachov; more important, with the policy of *glasnost*, a somewhat more accurate picture of the world is available to the average Soviet citizen. The circle of those receiving objective data from abroad in the sciences and technology has been expanded. At some point, Soviet citizens through their institutions will be permitted to interact, on line, in real time, with men and women in other countries. It is only several years, after all, since automatic telephone switching for international calls was restored after the Kremlin shut it down. It may take some years before telephones are permitted to tens of millions of Soviet citizens now denied them. Though microcomputers will enter homes, printers may only be available at government offices. Restrictive states, however, have disadvantages: financial and educational systems that do not encourage typing, programming and the keeping of accurate records, an inefficient telephone system, and little relationship between buyers and sellers, which stymies innovation. Yet technology may drive policy in the USSR as elsewhere.

As great new advances are made in science and technology through computerisation and ISDN linkages, the Kremlin will probably find it necessary to acknowledge the

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democratising factor of ISDN. The growth in the volume of phone calls already makes surveillance difficult. These linkages will, indeed, permit Soviet citizens in any part of the country to interact in real time with fellow citizens across the Asian land mass. Video cassette recorders are already adding to the horizontal communication provided in the USSR by ham radio, tape recording, and photography. The next stages are telefax and electronic mail—all difficult to monitor. What will this mean for restive nationality groups in the Baltic States and Armenia, and for the Tatars displaced 1,000 miles from their ancestral lands?

The threat to restrictive information systems will not come mainly from dissident messages or anti-state electronic *samizdat*, but from the erosion of government controls over great volumes of information. After balancing the risk of decentralised power against the advantages of ISDN, one of the Soviet Union's leading communications specialists unequivocally opts for computerisation: Academician Andrei Ershov describes his country's urgent need for "informatisation". He calls the use of the new communications technologies "an inescapable phase in the development of human civilisation". This, he says, requires "the democratisation of society's informational structure" as the "precondition of its vitality and its capacity for development". Ershov sees the United States completing its informatisation by 2020, but he warns that the Soviet Union is presently lagging far behind. The USSR, he adds, "must rehabilitate the concept of individual initiative".

MARXIST LEADERS in Eastern Europe will be watching such developments as clues to their own internal problems. And authoritarian rulers in Africa and elsewhere will face similar trade-offs. Should they join ISDN and secure the information needed to advance their countries' development? Should they permit only limited access, by having a small élite go on-line? The élite might monitor data which could create political problems if trickled down to the entire population. But would not undue restriction, in turn, hamper national development? For even restrictive domestic communication policies may not long keep knowledge of the potentials of ISDN from even the most remote countries, or from closed sectors within nations.

Communications systems such as shortwave radio will be increasingly difficult to control from the authoritarian centre. The USSR and Eastern Europe have discovered that. They ended shortwave jamming of incoming broadcasts in 1988. Such attempted closure had reduced the credibility of the nation's leaders and its political system. Slowly, authoritarian élites will be pressed to install the domestic communications systems which provide vital developmental information, and perhaps only incidentally stimulate democratic instincts.

Numerous political and economic variables make it impossible to forecast when ISDN may become truly universal. One may consider the goal of the International Telecommunications Union—the first and most experienced intergovernmental agency—long predating the League of Nations. The ITU hopes to persuade governments to make a telephone accessible to every person on earth early in the 21st century. One may assume that the information linkage of ISDN would accompany that timetable. Decades before, however, there will become apparent the massive effects of ISDN in the democratic industrialised countries, the democratic Third World, and in other politically flexible states. This remarkable thrust forward into a new epoch of peaceful development should soon persuade the still-authoritarian states to recognise that they are failing their citizens, and their nations' development, by providing less than full linkage to the Integrated Systems of Digital Networks. Sooner or later, even the authoritarians will have to take their chances in societies transformed by the democratisation of information.

No aspect of humankind can any longer escape the influence of the new communications technologies. They will soon alter all the natural and social sciences, all levels of education, all forms of cultural activity, all geopolitics. Everywhere.

The Turkeys

They lend our neighbours'
garden where they come to spend
the Christmas holidays the allure
of an Old English engraving.
Although grey ladies with on their heads
the congealed red tears
of a most distinguished grief,
they are more inquisitive even
than the chicken of whom, as they step
with circumspection across the paths,
they seem to be constantly warning each other:
remember, you're a turkey, dear.

Rutger Kopland

Translated by James Brockway

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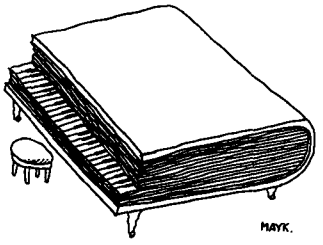
LANGUAGE

From Yiddish to Yinglish

Some Entries in a Lexicon—By LEO ROSTEN



SOME 20 YEARS AGO, ENCOUNTER published an article I had written on the surprising inroads that Yiddish was making into demotic English.[1] In the two decades since then, Yiddish has spread with exceptional vigour into every aspect of colloquial English—to form a vividly mischievous, ironic, sardonic and declamatory sub-species of English which I call "Yinglish". Yinglish consists of:

(1) Colourful words for which there are no precise synonyms (much less cognates) in English: *boo-boo, cockamamy, chutzpa, kibitzer, shlemiel, shmeer, shtik, shtarker.*

(2) Refulgent phrasings: "How come . . . ?", "Fat-shmat, he dances like Astaire", "Go fight City Hall", "That's not chopped liver", "What else?", "Who *knows* from . . . ?"

(3) Syntax—or what I prefer to call the stratagems of sarcasm, mockery, irony, or contempt: "Go know she was a karate champ", "He's a crazy", "Look who's talking", "It's a nothing of a dress", "Smart . . . he isn't", "On *her* it looks right", "Could be", "All *right* already!"

The most potent disseminator of Yinglish is, of course, television—its talk shows, its sitcoms, movies and plays. Why is this so? Because a walloping majority of TV's writers, directors and producers are Jews.

But Yiddish-English was born long before television: in cartoon strips (Harry Hirshfeld, Bud Fisher, George Herriman, Al Capp); in vaudeville (Potash and Perlmutter, Jack Benny, Lou Holtz, George Burns, Milton Berle, Georgie Jessel, the Marx Brothers); in Tin Pan Alley songs (Irving Berlin, Billy Rose, Howard Dietz, Harry Ruby, Larry Hart); in syndicated newspaper columns (Walter Winchell, Irving Hoffman, Lou Sobol, Leonard Lyons); in the columns of Damon Runyon, O. O. McIntyre, Jimmy Cannon, Jimmy Breslin—who were not Jews, but lived and worked in New York, and whose columns were deeply steeped in Jewish modalities of wit, banter, sarcasm, and persiflage; in the Broadway theatre (Irving Berlin, George S. Kaufman, Oscar Hammerstein II, Frank Loesser, Alan Jay Lerner); in radio (Sid Caesar's *Show of Shows*, *The Ed Wynn Show*, *The Fred Allen Show*, Milton Berle, the Goldbergs (shows written by Mel Brooks, Carl Reiner, Milton Josefsberg, Nat Perrin, Woody Allen); in fiction (Edna Ferber, Irwin Shaw, Norman Mailer, Herman Wouk, Philip Roth, Jerome Weidman, Saul Bellow, Joseph Heller, Bernard Malamud, Isaac Bashevis Singer, S. J. Perelman); and, of course, in American movies, to which all the "lively arts" talents sooner or later gravitated. The unprecedented reach and influence of American films swept around the entire globe, and created that monopoly on people's affections that led solemn sociologists to wring their hands over the debasing "cultural imperialism" of Hollywood.

The work of these talented persons owes a conspicuous—indeed, a decisive—debt to Yiddish, whether they spoke it or speak it or even understand it. For as Jews they were daily exposed to Jewish irony, ridicule, mockery, disdain—all the special attributes, the ingenuities of wit and the amplitude of humour expressed in the Yiddish tongue—and conveyed into English.

HUMOUR IS a rare, therefore exceptionally precious, manifestation of human creativity. The proof is self-evident: in the literature of any people, humorists are—always and everywhere—in a glaring minority.

The humour of any people is immensely illuminating, for it reveals a culture's deepest patterns of pride and shame, guilt or ambivalence. Humour expresses the scorn, the admiration, the approval or contempt embedded in a people's deepest values.

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[1] Leo Rosten, "Yiddish & English", ENCOUNTER, September 1968.

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Yiddish is a beguiling tongue. I have called it "the Robin Hood of languages". It developed a phenomenal variety of comic uses, an extraordinary range of observational nuances, a striking skill in delineating psychological insights, and remarkable modalities of paradox and mockery.

Since the culture of the Jews exalts reasoning, no less than faith, it is not surprising that so much Jewish wit hinges on logic to celebrate illogic. I have always thought that a liberating kind of lunacy dances through Jewish jokes. A mind-boggling example of this is found in a letter Groucho Marx once sent me:

> "*Dear Junior:* Excuse me for not answering you sooner. But I have been so busy not answering letters lately that I have not been able to get around to not answering yours in time. —*Groucho*"

I have never been able to improve upon my description of the special characteristics of Yiddish in the introduction to *The Joys of Yiddish* (1968). Permit me the luxury of quoting myself:

> "Steeped in sentiment, Yiddish is sluiced with sarcasm. It loves the ruminative, because it rests on a rueful past; it favours paradox, because it knows that only paradox can do justice to the injustices of life; it adores irony, because the only way the Jews could retain their sanity was to view a dreadful world with sardonic and astringent eyes. In its innermost heart, Yiddish swings between *schmaltz* and derision."

I ONCE REMARKED that no one can spend 24 hours in any major city in America or Great Britain without encountering a surprising number of words and phrases and inflectional stresses that have been plucked directly from Yiddish—if not in the English spoken, then surely in the newspapers and magazines the residents read, the radio programmes they listen to, the movies they see and adore, or the television fare to which they are addicted.

Television has, of course, become the most powerful lever of language and the most prolific disseminator of neologisms the world has ever seen. Let a sitcom or a talk show use some new, colourful word or phrase that is totally alien to English (*megilla*, *maven*, *shlep*) and it is only a matter of hours before that locution is being bandied about with delight from Beverly Hills to Bombay.

At least 400 individual words from Yiddish are now part of colloquial English. As for Yiddish idioms and syntax: I once kept a casual record of translated Yiddish I read or heard in English. And before three weeks had passed, my notes bulged with linguistic gems such as these:

> "That no-goodnik! Get lost. Big deal! How come you went? What's the bottom line? *Again* with the temper? It's okay by me, bubbee. Don't *shlep* that heavy case! Calm down, boychik! So have a *nosh*. Say, listen: a dummy, he's not! Eat your heart out. That's some fancy-shmancy outfit. Don't ask! We had a nice, long *shmooze*. So make with some laughs. That was some boo-boo! I need it like a hole in the head."

I now give you a random sampling of the tactics, syntax, phrases and words that have passed from Yiddish to Yinglish.

Accentuating disagreement, or forcefully dismissing an assertion, by tacking sh- or shm- on to a crucial word, then repeating the sardonic compound. This is Yinglish at its most mordant and its most effective, a priceless ploy to convey mockery, scorn, corrosive contempt.

> "Art-shmart, I call it garbage!"; "Fat-shmat, he is having the time of his life"; "Teacher-schmeacher, she has the manners of a mule!"; "Locked-shlocked, that door never *did* stay closed."

Accentuating scorn or disdain by moving an adjective to the front of a sentence. "Fronting" adjectives, which professional linguists call "topicalisation", is a prime example of the irony so easily achieved in Yinglish. (The device is also found in the colloquial dialogue written by English authors with sensitive antennae, e.g. Dickens.) Consider these exquisite examples:

> "What", asked Rappaport, "do you think of his wife?" "Interesting, she's not." (Or "Beautiful, she isn't". Or "Lucky, you can't call her".)

The bold transposition of predicate adjectives (or nouns, as in "A dummy, he's not") is particularly loved by speakers of Yinglish.[2] "Bert isn't a hero" is a juiceless characterisation compared with "A *hero*, Bert isn't".

Adjectives converted into nouns for purposes of emphasis or ridicule. Yinglish to the core. ("She's a crazy." "Have you heard any new funnies?" "Their kid is some ugly!")

Using an adjective as a noun demonstrates the delightful inventiveness of Yinglish: "a mental", "a cheap".

Please note: I am *not* talking about nouns like *smarty*, *toughie*, *softy*, *sharpy*, which are simply adjectives made into nouns by adding *-y* or *-ie*. I am discussing adjectives which, *entirely unchanged*, are colloquially used as nouns.

In *The Oxford Dictionary of the English Language*, for instance, *skinny* is described only as an adjective, never as a noun. And authorities such as William and Mary Morris *(Dictionary of Contemporary Usage)* and Harold Wentworth and Stuart Berg Flexner *(Dictionary of American Slang)* cite no usage that would contradict my claims.

Long, long before the turbulent 1960s, when youthful rebels latched on to "the crazies" as a proud characterisation of themselves—or of the more extreme advocates of their movement—American Jews were converting adjectives to

[2] A pioneer linguist has published a study of 100 college students to demonstrate that Jews are much more likely than non-Jews to accept the fronting of certain "indefinites". See Mark Feinstein, "Ethnicity and Topicalization in New York City English", *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, no. 26.

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nouns with complete equanimity. Early in this century, on the Lower East Side, in Brooklyn, in the Bronx, in the Jewish enclaves of Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, our grandparents were coining nouns such as "a fat" . . . "an ugly" . . . "a crazy".

Jewish comedians were particularly fond of such transmutations: "He certainly knows how to deliver a funny!" or "She is some piece of dull!"

Jewish children seemed drawn to such linguistic jewels as "My father is no cheap", or "Watch out for him; he's a real tricky".

I think the direct conversion of adjectives into nouns appealed to those who enjoy the mischief of colloquial English, the humour of unorthodox syntax, or the sheer surprise of novel usage.

> Julius Baylis had moved from Brooklyn to New Jersey.
>
> One day, on the commuter train, Baylis ran into Simon Laskin, a distant cousin.
>
> "Say, look, Shimmel!" Mr Baylis sang out.
>
> "Well, well, some surprise", smiled Mr Laskin. "Listen, I just heard you moved way out in the suburbs."
>
> "Absolutely."
>
> "Tell me, Julius, wasn't the change pretty tough for you and Millie?"
>
> "At foist, it was moider!" said Mr Baylis. "You know, a big house, a lot of grass, no place to go at night, not even a corner news-stand. . . ."
>
> "I can imagine!"
>
> "I don't mind telling you, Shimmel, that I was practically ready to move back to Brooklyn. Then I got myself a paramour. . . ." He beamed. "What a difference that made!"
>
> "A—*paramour*?" gulped Laskin.
>
> "That's right."
>
> "Does—Millie know?"
>
> "Sure she knows", said Baylis.
>
> Laskin blinked. "And she doesn't raise hell, Julie? What is she, some kind of *dumb*? Doesn't she even *mind*?"
>
> "Why should she mind?" echoed Mr Baylis. "Should she care *how* I cut the grass?"

All right already. Yinglish: used in parody or for comic characterisation. From the Yiddish *shoyn genug*, which means "already enough", or *genug shoyn*, which means "enough already".

"All *right* already", a thriving export from the Bronx, is simply a form of "Enough already!"

"All right already" and "*All right* already!" are commonly heard in many of the sitcoms in television.

(1) Enough!
(2) For God's sake!
(3) Please shut up!
(4) I can't *stand* any more!

"All right already" is not always deployed in disgust. It can be uttered in exasperated agreement—to cut off further discussion:

(5) Okay, okay, just stop nagging!
(6) You win!
(7) I give up: you shut up.
(8) So, let's get on with it.

Automatic apposition. A familiar, satirical Yinglish usage: the deliberate removal of coventional, syntactically coordinated pauses in spoken English—equivalent to the removal of appositive commas in written English. Apposition is automatically conferred: "My son the doctor . . ."; "My daughter the novelist . . ."; "My uncle the mathematician. . . ."

This construction is spoken boldly, as if "son-the-doctor" were one word. The particular pleasure-*cum*-pride of Jewish mothers is by stratagem transferred, kit and kaboodle, into the English vernacular.

Query: Is apposition without the customary pause employed when the speaker is speaking about disreputable relatives? Do mothers, that is, say: "My son the forger . . ."; "My daughter the call-girl . . ."; "My nephew the grave-robber . . ."?

Generalisation is difficult here. Ordinarily, Jewish mothers avoid like the plague any reference to felonious or even shady relatives. But when a reference is unavoidable, the speaker may say, "My son, who no-good informers *framed* . . .", or "My daughter, who was absolutely *forced* to confess something she never in a hundred *years* could do . . . ."

Chelm. Pronounced KHELM (not *Ch*elm): give it the guttural *kh* of *"Ach!"* Rhymes with "helm". The legendary town inhabited by half-wits, simpletons and fools.[3] The Jewish equivalent of England's Gotham, whose "wise men" were idiots. How Chelm achieved its reputation for bumbling gaffes, cockamamy reasoning and hilarious *non sequiturs*, I do not know.

Chelm would enjoy no special name or fame, and surely no place in the Yinglish lexicon, were it not that in Jewish folklore it has become the archetypical incubator of amiable nitwits, the equivalent of Holland's "Kampen", Italy's "Cuneo", and Germany's "Schildburg"—all famous for boneheads, dunces, and nincompoops. There must be 1,000 tall tales about the unbelievable Chelmites. I give you three of my favourites.

> The wisdom of Chelm has decreed: "Sleep faster; we need the pillows!"

> The current craze in Chelm, I am reliably informed, is a game called "Guess Who?" It is a simple game, but the Chelmites roll on the floor in laughter as they play it.
>
> What are the rules of "Guess Who?" There is only one. A player leaves the room: the rest of the group try to guess who it was.

> At their weekly meeting, the council of wise men in Chelm discussed this profound philosophical question: "Which is more important to mankind: the moon or the sun?"

[3] Chelm is used as the name of a mythical place, but there were two real Chelms—one 40 miles east of Lublin, with a population of around 4,000; another just east of Tarnow.

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The debate waxed eloquent and went on for an hour. Then Rabbi Shmerl raised both hands, and a silence fell upon the elders; for when Rabbi Shmerl raised both hands it meant that he had reached a definite conclusion, which he would announce with definitive reasoning.

And this is what the saintly rabbi of Chelm now proclaimed: "The answer is obvious, *baruch ha-Shem*, for it follows the teaching of our beloved Talmud . . . . The moon, my children, *has* to be more important than the sun! Why is that so? Reflect. The sun shines only in the daytime, which is *when we don't need it*. But the moon shines at night, when we do!"

Criticising a person or a policy simply by uttering the name as a back-formation with a prefatory fricative of disdain. An economic, albeit eloquent, way of expressing disagreement, disparagement, disdain, or disgust—in a manner not available in conventional discourse. This has become a very popular ploy in Yinglish. I love it.

"Hitler-Shmitler, the man was a psychopath!"
"Smoke-shmoke, you're talking about *cancer!*"
"Atheists-shmatheists, when they face death they're not so certain."

Demolishing a statement with an outlandish remark. Yinglish includes psychological overtones no less than words, phrases, and syntax. Jews are so appreciative of wit, sarcasm, innuendo, and so annoyed by the obvious or the banal, that it is not surprising that their humour prizes swift and deflating observations.

The following is a true anecdote, about a twelve-year-old boy who was given to romanticising, and his wry seventy-year old grandfather, who often cautioned him not to be so gullible.

BOY: Listen, Grampa, it says here that it cost the United States almost ten billion dollars to put a man on the moon.
GRANDFATHER: Well, well. And does that include meals?!

Dismissing an idea with scorn simply by framing it as an indignant question. ("You think *I* should invite *her* to our wedding?!" "*I* would be better off in Scarsdale?") Whenever a question is framed "*I* should" or "*I* would"—instead of "Should I" or "Would I"—you may safely conclude that you are being told, not asked.

Enough with . . . . Yinglish galore. Metaphrase from Yiddish: *Genug mit*, which was widely used, in translation, in Jewish immigrant or first-generation circles.

(1) That's enough about that.
(2) Stop!
(3) I don't want to hear any more about that!
(4) Please change the subject.

Enough with is a less brusque, less abrasive way of saying *Enough already!*—which can be uttered only after enough annoyances have accumulated.

Like *Enough already!*, the solecism *Enough with* has spread like wildfire through the vernacular of the Yinglish-speaking/comprehending world. As with *Enough already!*, I urge that *Enough with* be employed only for deliberate sarcastic or mock-serious effects.

Three elderly Jewish women sat on the porch, rocking back and forth, seemingly lost in memories.
At last, Mrs Trakish sighed deeply "Oy. . . ."
Silence.
A moment later, Mrs Blumblut sighed. "O-y-y-y."
Silence.
Then Mrs Komsky scowled. "Enough with the children! Let's talk about cholesterol."

Fancy-shmancy. Pure Yinglish—and immensely popular as a "put-down" among Americans (and some Englishmen) of whatever ethnic or religious affiliation. A vivid reduplication, technically.

(1) Overly ornate. ("Did you ever see such a fancy-shmancy home?")
(2) Affected. ("When did she begin to use such fancy-shmancy language?")
(3) Pretentious. ("That fancy-shmancy Maurice Vermont: I knew him when he was Morris Greenberg.")
(4) Attempt at style that fails, hence is vulgar. ("Their decorator is 'classy', so their furniture is fancy-shmancy.")

The sardonic *shm* must have been among the earliest of what linguists call reduplications that was created or embroidered by Lower East Side Jews. *Fancy-shmancy* came to the attention of cosmopolitan New York when it appeared in the very popular vaudeville sketches of Potash and Perlmutter, Smith and Dale, *et alia*. The astringent phrase then graced the pages of *The New Yorker* in essays by the fastidious S. J. Perelman and stories by the ethnic humorist Arthur Kober.

Faulting a virtue by repeating the word with a prefatory fricative of disapproval. This Yinglish ploy has caught on with great vigour, particularly in television sitcoms—which explains its wide dissemination in English conversation and newspaper columns.

"Neat-shmeat, he should go see a psychiatrist."
"Happy-shmappy, she makes *other* people miserable!"
"Good-shmood, why doesn't he go back to his family?"

Gelt. Yinglish, often encountered in English stories, newspaper articles, and feature columns. Rhymes with "felt". From German: *Geld*: "money".

(1) Money.
(2) Wealth.

Gelt, like *shekels* or *mazuma*, has long been a part of American slang. "Where did he stash the *gelt*?" "He'll do anything for *gelt*."

A week after the stock market plummeted to a new low,

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two brokers met. "Lord, what a horrible day!" groaned Ted Solovsky. "And there's not a sign of relief in sight. Charlie, to tell you the truth, I can't remember when I last had one good night's sleep!"

"Really?" said Charlie. "*I* sleep like a baby."

"*What?!* Do you *mean* that?"

"Absolutely", said Charlie. "I get up every two hours—and cry."

Go know. . . . From Yiddish: *Gey vays.* A wry or heartfelt disclaimer. Picturesque Yinglish.

(1) How could *I* know?

(2) How could you *expect* me to know?

(3) How could *anyone* know? ("Go know that beautiful girl was an undertaker!") This vivid disclaimer is matchless as a stratagem of self-exculpation: "Go know my telephone was tapped!"

(4) A sarcastic gloss. "Go know you were a dead-beat."

(5) Don't be a fool. "Go teach a dog how to bark." "Go show Picasso how to paint."

I'm telling you (that). . . . Stuart Berg Flexner, co-author of *The Dictionary of American Slang,* attributes this expression to the influence of American Jews. I agree with him.

Please distinguish between "I tell you . . ." and "*I'm* telling you. . . ." The former is, of course, straightforward English; it is, indeed, elegant, when used in the hortatory mode; it is the phrase that takes on majesty in the numberless admonitions of the New Testament. In contrast, "*I'm* telling you . . ." is quintessential (translated) Yiddish: it uses the present participle dear to Jewish hearts; it calls attention beforehand to the fact that the speaker, and no lesser authority, is the source of the information to be revealed, and it places the self of the annunciator in the very centre of the substance to be communicated.

Indignation intensified by echoing a question without altering a syllable, to express resentment over being confronted by such an insensitive insinuation. Yinglish at its finest. The critical point in this ploy lies in echoing the exact words of the question asked—but without the interrogatory upbeat; *i.e.,* simply repeat the question as a declarative sentence, accompanied by whatever ironic, accusatory, even embittered intonations you can deploy, using facial expressions or gestures to magnify the refutation. The repertoire of aggrievement (or repudiation) available in this tactical *tour de force* is more easily illustrated than defined.

Q: Have you talked to Dora?

A: (steely): Have I talked to Dora. (Meaning: "Am I made of stone *not* to telephone a friend who just had her leg amputated?!")

Low-life. Yinglish, with panache.

(1) Someone who lacks character.

(2) A vulgar, coarse person.

(3) An untrustworthy, unreliable person.

(4) One who lives and acts in a low-class manner.

(5) A gambler, sharpie, dissembler, petty racketeer.

(6) A no-goodnik, plain and simple.

You may think that *low-life* is so obvious a compound noun that it must have been used in English long, long before an immigrant Jew landed in London or New York. Yet the magisterial *Oxford English Dictionary* does not to this day contain "low-life" or "low life" as an entry. "Low-lived" is there, as an adjective, *e.g.,* a "low-lived man" (that means a mortal with a low life expectancy).

Mensh (mench, mentch, mentsh). An absolutely unique word. Quintessential Yinglish. Widely used and understood in English. Rhymes with "bench". From German: *Mensch*: "person". Plural: *menschen.* I prefer the *mensh* spelling because in Yiddish one letter *(shin)* renders the *sh* sound, without the *c* used in German.

The word *mensh* is being heard and read more and more in American speech, newspapers, journals, books. The word is today to be found in many English dictionaries: *The American Heritage Dictionary, Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary, The Random House Dictionary,* among others.

As used in Yiddish, and now in Yinglish, *mensh* means:

(1) Someone of admirable character. "There is a *mensh!*"

(2) Someone who is upright, honourable, trustworthy. "Only a *mensh* would refuse an offer like that!"

(3) Someone deserving of great respect. "Okay, he lost the election by a hundred thousand votes, but his campaigning shows he was a real *mensh.*"

(4) Someone of surpassing decency—or tact. "He opened the door to the bathroom—and there completely naked, stood a beautiful woman! He gulped, cleared his throat, then backing out said, 'Excuse *me,* sir'. . . ."

(5) A human being "Act like a *mensh*—not like an animal!"

The most withering criticism one can make of someone else's conduct or character, manners or taste is to say, "He's not a *mensh*", or "She did not act like a *mensh*".

Mishling, mischling. Recommended with zest for Yinglish. Pronounced MISH-*ling*. From the German: "hybrid", "cross-breed". Someone of mixed ethnic or religious parentage.

As used in my circles, *mishling* refers to someone with one Jewish and one non-Jewish parent. History bursts with the names of important *mishlings*—in science, philosophy, art, politics.

Although many anthropologists use *mishling*, I have not found it in a single dictionary of English, including the great *Oxford. Mishling* is much nicer than "half-Jewish" or "half-gentile" or "half-breed" or half-anything.

Mish-mosh, Mish-mash. Quintessential and irreplaceable Yinglish. Pronounce it MISH-MOSH, please, to rhyme with "pish-posh"—and not with "dish-dash". I prefer to spell this delicious word *mish-mosh*, as it is pronounced, but the thirteen-volume *Oxford English Dictionary* spells it *mish-mash*,

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and traces it to the German *mischmasch* and the Danish (!) *misk-mask*. Still, the total acceptance of mish-mosh/mash in current English is surely a consequence of the vigorous and incessant use of the word, in conversation and in newspapers and books, by Jews.

(1) A mix-up, a mess, a hodgepodge, a fouled-up state of things.

(2) Confusion galore. ("What a *mish-mosh*!" "You never heard such a *mish-mosh* of ideas.")

No Jew pronounces this "mish-m*a*sh". I consider *mish-mosh* a triumph of onomatopoeia—and a word unlike any I know to suggest flagrant disorder.

Regarding the Danish provenance (*misk-mask*): in the United States, where little Danish is heard or spoken, it was Jews on the lower East Side who latched on to the vivid German compound noun (with two *sh*s) to enrich their Yinglish. Remember that the *sh* sibilant was and is conspicuous in Yiddish mocking appellations: *shlemiel, shlep, shlimazel, shlomp, shmendrick, shmuck. . . .*

No one here to talk to, There's no one here to talk to! Hyperbole from Yiddish: *Nito tsu vemen tsu reydn!*—which deserves wider usage by Yinglishmen.

(1) It's useless for me to talk to you: you refuse to listen.

(2) You are not *capable* of understanding!

(3) You are too stubborn; why waste my breath trying to reason with you?

(4) You really don't *exist*: you're too stupid!

The words are English and the syntax ordinary. What then makes the content Yinglish? The rhetorical murder of everyone except the aggrieved speaker.

Sarcasm amplified via innocuous words used ironically. "He knocked out only three of my teeth." "I doubt that she ate more than fourteen sandwiches." "Was that much to ask—a measly five million dollars?" Here is a true tale:

> "I don't like airplanes. I don't trust airplanes. I don't *need* airplanes!" said the great pianist, Leopold Godowsky.
>
> "But Leopold, I have gone over the actual statistics! Do you realise you're safer in an airplane than in a bathtub? Or in an auto—"
>
> "You can do anything with statistics."
>
> The friend paused. "Perhaps you're right, Leopold. After all, deep down, we each feel that wherever we are, we go—when *God* calls us!"
>
> "Sure", said Godowsky. "But why should I be 20,000 feet up in the air when God calls the *pilot?*"

sh-, shm-, sch-, schm-. These particles are solidly entrenched in Yinglish as prefatory expressions of mockery, scorn, or derogation.

(1) To deride a word in Yinglish (as in Yiddish), the word is repeated—but with the *sh-* or *shm-*[4] -prefixed to the repetition. "The doctor says she has a serious virus?" "Virus-shmirus, as long as she's OK."

(2) sh- or *shm-* is the signal for an astringent symphony of dis-esteem. A great many Yiddish (and Yinglish) words jeer, sneer and snicker via this simple sonic introduction.

Shlock, schlock. Familiar to any Yinglishman. Rhymes with "clock". *Shlock* is both an adjective and a noun. From German: *Schlag*: a "blow". Perhaps the Yiddish means merchandise that has been "knocked around".

(1) A shoddy, cheaply made article. ("It's a piece of *shlock*.")

(2) A defective or fake article; an object; an object one was cheated over. ("That watch will never keep time. It's *shlock*.")

(3) A disagreeable, peevish person.

(4) A shrew, a whining wife, a *yenta*—and a slob, to boot. ("His beloved? There's a *shlock* of a girl.")

(5) The gaudy, gimcrack articles sold at circuses and carnivals or in fly-by-night stores.

(6) Dope, narcotics. *Shlock* means "junk" and "junk" has come to mean narcotics.

(7) Television. *Shlock-meister* ("*shlock*-master") is the agent who provides free gifts (for free plugs) on television game programmes. Manufacturers employ a *shlock-meister* to get their products displayed on TV. Never was such huge publicity gained at such low cost.

Shmuck (noun), ***shmekel*** (diminutive). Vulgar, obscene, *shmuck* has become a forceful and very popular epithet in Yinglish. I have heard gentile women (especially executives) use it as a snort of contempt or disdain. Rhymes with "stuck". From German, one way or another, where *Schmuck* is "an ornament", or "jewellery"; *shmuck* is "neat", "smart", and *schmücken* means "to decorate". In Yiddish, *shmock* means "an ornament".

(1) (Obscene) Penis. Never utter *shmuck* lightly in the presence of women and children. Indeed, it was uneasiness about *shmuck* that led to the truncated euphemism *shmo*. Any *shmo* should know what *shmo* comes from. Jews tend to be puritanical about public references to the pubic.

I never heard any Jewish elders use *shmuck,* which was regarded as so vulgar as to be taboo. But vulgarity has its *raison d'être.*

(2) (Taboo) A dope, a jerk, a boob.

(3) A clumsy bumbler. In this sense, *shmuck*, like its English equivalent, is widely used by males, and with gusto; few impolite words express comparable contempt. ("What a *shmuck* I was to believe him!")

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[4] IMPORTANT NOTE: I strongly disapprove of using *sch* or *schm* instead of *sh* for English transliterations of Yiddish words. *Sch* is German; *sh* is Yiddish—which, in fact, uses a single letter *(shin)* for the *sh* sound. There is no letter for *sch* in Yiddish. I use the *sh* and exile the *sch* wherever possible. In some cases, to use *sch* is flatly wrong: *e.g., borsht* is a Slavic word, not at all connected to German, as the commonly used English *borscht* would make it seem. *Shlemiel,* for instance, comes from Hebrew/Yiddish and should no more be spelled with a *c* (*schlemiel*) than *Shabbes* be rendered as *Schabbes*. Moreover, to the Anglo-Saxon eye, the cluster *sch* signals a *sk* sound: *school, scholar, schooner*. Why tempt non-Jews to pronounce *schlemiel* as "skemiel" or *schlep* as "sklep"?

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(4) (Vulgar) A detestable fellow; a son of a bitch.

(5) A trickster, hypocrite. ("That low-down, hypocritical *shmuck*!")

Note the curious etymological anatomy of *shmuck*.[5] The German word means an ornament or jewel. The word was not lewd in German nor obscene in Yiddish. How did the connotational leap take place from "jewel" to "penis"?

By mothers bathing or drying their baby sons. They would croon over them. What better word for the "member" than "little jewel" . . . "ornament" . . . "cute pendant"?

In English, men josh about "the family jewels" (and they do not mean rubies). German or Hungarian nurses and governesses, I am reliably informed, used the euphemistic *shmuck*. Jewish mothers and sisters were puritanical enough to refer to "that . . . place" or "that [his, her] . . . thing."

The following story is bound to become a classic, but you had better skip it if you are finicky about *shmuck*.

> Mr Zachary Pinchik—sixty-five, a widower—was having a lonely time in Miami Beach. He observed a man of his age who was never without a companion; people forever streamed around him, extending invitations, swapping jokes.
>
> So Pinchik screwed up his courage and said to the popular paragon, "Mister, excuse me, I'm so lonesome. What should I do to—make friends here?"
>
> "Get—a camel", sneered the other.
>
> "A camel?" gasped Pinchik.
>
> "Sure. Ride it up and down Collins Avenue every day, and before you know it, everyone in Miami will be asking 'Who *is* that man?' You'll have to hire a secretary to handle all the invitations!"
>
> So Zachary Pinchik bought a paper and looked through the ads, and by good fortune read of a circus, stranded in Miami, that needed capital. Mr Pinchik telephoned the circus owner, and within half-an-hour he had rented a camel!
>
> The next morning, Mr Pinchik, wearing khaki shorts and a pith helmet, mounted his camel and set forth on Collins Avenue. Everywhere people stopped, buzzed, gawked, pointed.
>
> Every day for a week, Mr Pinchik rode his trusty steed. One morning, his telephone rang. "Mr Pinchik! This is the parking lot! Your camel—it's gone! Stolen!"
>
> At once, Mr Pinchik phoned the police. A Sergeant O'Neill answered: *"What*? . . . It sounded as though you said someone had stolen your *camel*!"
>
> "That's right."
>
> "Er—I'll fill out a form. . . . How tall was the animal?"
>
> "From the sidewalk to his back, where I sat, a good six feet."
>
> "What colour was it?"
>
> "What *colour*?" echoed Pinchik. *"Camel* colour!"
>
> "Male or female?"
>
> "*Hanh*?" gasped Mr Pinchik.
>
> "Was the animal male or female?"
>
> "How am I supposed to know about the sex of a *camel*?" exclaimed Mr Pinchik. "Wait! Aha! Yes, yes! It was a male!"
>
> "Are you sure?"
>
> "I'm *positive*, Officer, because I just remembered. Every place I was riding on that camel, I could hear the people hollering, 'Hey! Look! Look at the *shmuck* on that camel!'"

What's to . . . ? This deplorable metathesis has, nevertheless, won great popularity in sports and show-biz circles. From Yiddish: *Vos iz tsu. . . .*

This elimination of "there" ("What is there—") is indubitable Yinglish, and thrives in popular phrasings like: "What's to lose?" "What's to celebrate?" "What's to get all worked-up over?"

My only comment about such philistine diction is: "What's to comment?"

Who knows? Pure and priceless Yinglish, for the reasons elucidated below. From Yiddish: *Ver veyst?*

Any language contains the neutral interrogation "Who knows?" But as rendered in Yinglish ("*Who* knows?" or, with umbrage, "Who *knows*?"), the phrase is not interrogatory: it is declarative. It is also accusatory ("Why do you ask me for an answer to a question that is clearly unanswerable?") or sarcastic ("What a dope you are to think I can answer something like that!") or philosophical ("Beware the surface innocence of the question; to answer is to risk entrapment in epistemology").

The ironic ploy of "Who knows?" may be transferred to any number of pseudo-interrogative asseverations: "Who *cares*?" "Who could?" "Who should?"

(1) I don't know!

(2) Maybe someone, some*where*, knows the answer—but I doubt it.

(3) You may search the whole *world* for an answer to that question, but—believe me!—there is none!

(4) It's Greek to me.

(5) I see *you* don't know the answer either.

> Dr Rifkind: God I'm so *tired*! All day long, day in and day out, all I hear are stories of pain, suffering, conflict. Sometimes I really regret going into psychiatry. Hermie, how do you manage to look so *serene* after listening all day?
>
> Dr Hersch: *Who* listens?!

Yes, I *know* you heard that one before.

What's with . . . ? Another favourite of denizens of the racetrack, the basketball courts, the movie studios. A vigorous, albeit unaesthetic, newcomer to Yinglish. From Yiddish: *Vos iz mit . . . ?*

(1) What's wrong with . . . ?

(2) Why are you (he, she) acting this way?

(3) Explain! Tell me more.

The proper English phrasing would be "What's the matter

[5] A scholarly literature has grown up about the etymology of *shmuck*, *putz*, and *shlemiel*, guided by the researches of Dr Gerald Cohen of the University of Missouri.

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with . . . ?" or "What's wrong with . . . ?" or "What's bothering . . . ?" The syntax of "What's with . . . ?" is distinctly Yiddish; its popularity in American and British slang has made it Yinglish.

> As the air-raid sirens began to shriek all over Haifa, Mr and Mrs Plachek leaped out of bed and toward the corridor and the air-raid shelter, when suddenly Mrs Plachek cried, "Wait! My false teeth!"
>
> "What's with the teeth?" cried Mr Plachek. "You think the Arabs are going to drop *sand*wiches?"

Yid. An offensive, demanding, disagreeable way of referring to a Jew—if you pronounce this *Yid*, to rhyme with "kid", instead of YEED, to rhyme with "deed". Jews say "Yeed"'—unless they want to characterise a Jew as a coarse, vulgar, ill-mannered, greedy, grubby *(et alia)* person. From the German: *Jude*: "Jew". And *Jude* is a truncated form of *Yehuda*, the name given to the Jewish Commonwealth in the period of the Second Temple. The name, in turn, was derived from the name of one of Jacob's sons, *Yehuda* (Judah, in English), whose descendants constituted one of the tribes of Israel.

(1) A Jew, male or female—if you pronounce the word to rhyme with "deed": *Yeed.*

(2) A word akin to *kike*—and just as offensive—if pronounced to rhyme with "did".

Permit me a brief sortie into linguistic self-indulgence. In Hebrew, *Yehudi* means an inhabitant of *Yehuda* (romanised: Judea). Jews have called themselves "Yehudi" in every language they obliged to speak. But the word suffered syncopation, so to speak *e.g.*, in the Talmud, Rabbi "Yuda" replaced "Yehuda", and "Yuda" became "Yudi". By the 13th century, says the most learned Dr Nathan Susskind, every accented *u* that is followed by an *i* of the next syllable became an umlauted *ü* in German. In Yiddish, the umlauted *ü* was unrounded into an *i*. Hence the progression: Yehudi, Yudi, Yude, Yid. (Whew!)

> Mrs James Hale Rillington III telephoned the headquarters of the Infantry base several miles from Forty Elms, her ancestral home. "This is Mrs James Hale Rillington the Third. With Thanksgiving coming up", she said, "I would like to invite ten of your enlisted men to share our family feast at Forty Elms."
>
> "That's wonderful, Mrs Rillington."
>
> "Only one thing. We—prefer not to have any Yids. I'm sure you understand."
>
> "Madam, I *quite* understand."
>
> When her bell rang on Thanksgiving Day, Mrs Rillington herself hurried to the door. "Welcome to—". She stopped. Under the great portico stood ten black soldiers. "My God!" she gasped. "There has been a terrible mistake!"
>
> The black sergeant said, "Oh no, ma'am. Captain Kaminsky *never* makes a mistake."

Of *course* I know I have used this parable elsewhere. Is it not worth repeating?

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THEATRE

Kitchen-Sink Nostalgia

By Malcolm Rutherford

THE BRITISH must have been a funny lot of people around 1956. Looking back at the reviews of the first performances of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, it is hard to see how any of them were justified. The reviews fell into three categories: the sharply dismissive, the indifferent, and the ecstatic. Harold Hobson in *The Sunday Times* wrote of the first night that the occasion was "entirely unmemorable". The two London evening papers—there being two evening papers in those days—were even harsher. The critic in the *Evening News* described the play as "the most putrid bosh". Milton Shulman in the *Evening Standard* wrote that it achieved "only the stature of a self-pitying snivel".

So much for the dismissive. The indifferent view was expressed by Philip Hope-Wallace in the *Manchester Guardian*. He saw it as "a strongly felt but rather muddled first drama". The ecstasy came from Kenneth Tynan in a famous review in *The Observer* that deserves to be quoted—yet again—at some length. Tynan wrote:

> "*Look Back in Anger* presents post-War youth as it really is, with special emphasis on the non-U intelligentsia who live in bed-sitters and divide the Sunday papers into two groups, 'posh' and 'wet'. [In 1956 there were only two 'posh' Sunday newspapers.] To have done this at all would be a signal achievement; to have done it in a first play is a minor miracle. All the qualities are there, qualities one had despaired of ever seeing on the stage —the drift towards anarchy, the instinctive leftishness, the automatic rejection of 'official' attitudes, the surrealist sense of humour. . . the casual promiscuity, the sense of lacking a crusade worth fighting for and, underlying all these, the determination that no-one who dies shall go unmourned."

And, in a striking phrase, Tynan concluded: "I doubt if I could love anyone who did not wish to see *Look Back in Anger*. It is the best young play of its decade."

I think that, despite the hyperbole, Tynan was the closest to being right, though he was right for the wrong reasons. Yet it is worth noting how—even now—exaggerated claims are made. Harry Ritchie writes in a recent book, *Success Stories*,[1] from which some of the above quotations are taken, that "*Look Back in Anger* changed ideas about the English theatre. . . . It turned the social conventions upside down, replacing the gentility of 'Loamshire' plays with the tensions and aggressions of 'kitchen sink' drama." And again: "*Look Back in Anger* changed the course of mainstream English drama." That, if I may say so, is rubbish: replacing literary criticism with social comment.

It can hardly be denied, however, that for those of us who were young and at school at the time, *Look Back in Anger* had a terrific sense of excitement. I think that we all felt that there was a little bit of Hamlet in Jimmy Porter: he had soliloquies. What I remember best are the jokes: for example, when Cliff and Jimmy decide to change the name of their musical comedy act to Jock and Day: "When jocund day stood tiptoe on the misty mountain top." (The audience missed it completely in this summer's revival.) Or Alison talking about Jimmy's university: "Not so much red brick as white tile." A curious remark, really, for the play was written well before the Robbins Report and the University expansion.

There is perhaps some confused nostalgia in looking back at *Look Back in Anger* now. The first night was on 8 May 1956. That was supposed to be a pregnant year in British political history: the retreat from empire and the realisation of relative impotence. Yet look carefully at the dates. The play was actually written in 1955, the year of a great Tory victory at the polls. The great events of 1956—when the Suez Canal started to flow through Lady Eden's drawing-room and the Soviet Union invaded Hungary—did not take place until the second half of the year. There is nothing, directly or indirectly, in *Look Back in Anger* about the Middle East or the Suez humiliation. All that comes in Osborne's later play, *The Entertainer*, when Laurence Olivier was wrapped up in a Union Jack. And if you want to add an historical footnote, there is no reference in either play to the Treaty of Messina. There is no evidence that Jimmy Porter, John Osborne, or even Kenneth Tynan wanted to join the Common Market. None of them were exactly forward-looking. What I suspect is that the political significance was injected into the plays by Tynan and, given the turbulent events that were going on at broadly the same time, we all swallowed it.

THERE ARE A COUPLE of other oddities. To take the smaller one first: Tynan wrote in his review of Jimmy Porter's "casual promiscuity". Yet, unless one takes an exceptionally narrow definition of promiscuity, that must be wrong. Even in the 1950s, it cannot have been all that unusual for a man to have loved more than one woman over time. And there is no suggestion whatsoever in the text that Jimmy's relationships with women are casual, or even unfaithful. "Fatalistic" would be a more accurate way of putting it. When

[1] Harry Ritchie, *Success Stories: Literature and the Media in England, 1950–1959* (Faber, 1988).

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Alison goes and Helena stays, Jimmy does not go out to look for somebody else. He accepts Helena.

The bigger oddity is the general belief that Alison is downtrodden and passive, incapable of making her own decisions. That is not true either. She did not have to marry Jimmy in the first place—she was not pregnant, indeed had not even slept with him—but she chose to do so. She did not have to stay with him and, after she leaves, it is her decision to return to him. Helena, too, imposes herself on Jimmy, rather than the other way round. I think that the women in the play come out rather well. They are not so different from the men. Alison is quite capable of playing Jimmy at his own game. Here she is in Act I. Her arm has been burnt by the iron in a scuffle, Jimmy has withdrawn and Cliff is attending to it:

> "I keep looking back, as far as I remember, and I can't think what it was to feel young, really young. Jimmy said the same thing to me the other day. I pretended not to be listening—because I knew that would hurt him, I suppose. And—of course—he got savage, like tonight. But I knew just what he meant. I suppose it would have been easy to say, 'Yes, darling, I know just what you mean. I know what you're feeling.' (*Pause*) It's those easy things that seem to be so impossible with us."

There is nothing in those lines to suggest that Alison understands the rules of the ménage any less than Jimmy does. She does not blame herself for marrying him; only for not coping better.

To be sure, *Look Back in Anger* played in London in August 1989, with Kenneth Branagh as Jimmy and Emma Thompson (now Branagh's wife) as Alison, was bound to be different from the original production. As it happened, Branagh and Thompson were also appearing on television at the same time in the repeat of *Fortunes of War*, the series based on Olivia Manning's trilogy of wartime novels. There, too, they play man and wife, and there were a few times when one could imagine them rehearsing for the revival of Osborne's play. Guy Pringle, the hero of *Fortunes of War*, may be more of an intellectual than Jimmy Porter, but he is still not above male assertiveness. "Give up your job", he tells his wife in episode five. "I shall be working 24 hours a day and will need you to look after me. . . . You have a job, I have work." Pringle's wife is socially superior to him, as Alison is to Jimmy. In politics, Pringle is even more self-avowedly Left-wing than Porter. Emma Thompson, both as Harriet Pringle and as Alison Porter, is quite capable of fighting back, and of going on loving. There was a lot of *Fortunes of War* in this *Look Back in Anger*.

LOOKING BACK to 1956 again, however, I do not think that my original impressions have much changed. It is an extraordinarily—even classically—well-constructed play. Take, for instance, the opening of Act III, where the curtain goes up on Helena working at the same ironing-board as Alison at the start of Act I: a brilliant piece of theatre. It may be "kitchen sink" rather than drawing-room comedy, but the rules are exactly the same. Anyway, "kitchen sink" is something of a pretentious misnomer. All the characters are rather bourgeois in their way. That is why they insist on the ironing. When Cliff's new trousers are seen to be crumpled, it is Jimmy who insists that they must be pressed. No jeans, or anything like that. The big difference between now and then is their automatic assumption that it was the woman who should use the iron. Nobody questioned that at the time: neither Jimmy, nor Cliff; neither Alison, nor Helena. So it was hardly a social statement.

The play is also a rather poignant love story. Alison marries Jimmy, leaves him, then returns when she has lost her baby. If there were a *Look Back in Anger* sequel, she might well leave him again. But there is no need for that: the play stands. The key line, in the context of its time, comes from Alison talking to her father, who has spent most of his life in India: "You're hurt because everything is changed. Jimmy is hurt because everything is the same. And neither of you can face it."

It is a familiar Osborne theme. A lesser-known play, *West of Suez*, is set on "a sub-tropical island, neither Africa nor Europe, but some of both, also less than both". The characters are spread across the generations, and when someone mentions the War, the response is: "Yours or ours?", meaning 1914 or 1939? *Look Back in Anger* reflects that. I don't see much anger in it: more nostalgia. But Tynan was right. It probably was the best young play, and perhaps the best British play, of the decade.

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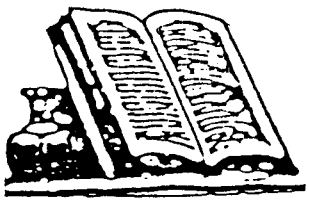
IN THE MARGIN

New York Notes

By Anthony Hartley



ON FIFTH AVENUE Scribners has closed. By a cruel irony its spectacularly ornate *art-nouveau* shop-front is being kept to serve as an entrance to electronics or men's "furnishings". But a great New York bookstore is gone. The massed paperbacks and latest best-sellers of Barnes & Noble on the other side of the street are no substitute. Strangely enough the Anchor Bookshop, with its aristocratic selection of second-hand books, is still there. I had not expected to find it intact, but its basement with ranks of ponderous biographies of Theodore Roosevelt and William Taft is unchanged. It is one of the wonders of New York and, given its position—on 59th Street between Park and Lexington—one of the most vulnerable. Of course, near Lower Broadway there is also the Strand bookstore and its vast anarchic collection of second-hand books. None the less, the lack of a really good seller of new books—a shop intended for someone who does not just want the latest "great" novel or "intimate" biography, designed to send their readers into a trance on a long air flight—is a serious matter. Hunting for any but the most immediate or most popular book becomes impossible.

As it happened, I was searching for a copy of a little-known, but brilliant, American political novel of the early 1960s. Successful political novels are rare, but William Brammer's *The Gay Place* (the reference is to Scott Fitzgerald and not to homosexuality) comes off. It has as its central figure a Texan governor who is a portrait of L.B.J.—so much so that the author was forbidden the presidential plane in the 1964 election campaign. The book was described by one critic as reality "seen through a blurred whisky glass", but a mixture of alcohol and the prophet Isaiah is typical of one region of American politics. It should be read, but where to find it? In New York today I hardly know where to look.

It is some compensation that another gripping view of American politics—a best-seller at the moment—*is* available. This is a blow by blow account by Leo Damore of the Chappaquiddick affair, twenty years after.[1] It is a revealing and gruesome account of how Senator Edward Kennedy's men tried to protect him after the motor accident which led to the death of Mary Jo Kopechne. The story is told in great detail, with the cooperation of Kennedy's cousin, Joseph Gargan, one of those who gave the party on Chappaquiddick Island, and the result is a sort of primer of how to fix things in the United States, if you possess political clout. The shocking part of it is not so much Kennedy's panic after the car crash, since anyone might lose his head in those circumstances, though most of us would hope not to, as the way in which the death was regarded by Kennedy staff purely in terms of the Senator's career. Particularly revealing is the attitude of the redoubtable Kenneth O'Donnell, sometimes described as the closest adviser to President Kennedy:

> "Kenny would have knocked Teddy out cold at the landing when he didn't want to report the incident, then called the Coast Guard, the U.S. Marines—you name it—and had Teddy taken to a hospital 'with serious head injuries'. . . . Maybe the girl could have been saved, maybe not. But Teddy would have been all right."

There is the tone of another section of American politics here—Kennedy politics. Humanly speaking, it does not seem much better than Watergate. But nobody has made a film of it. . . .

IN THE BAR at the Algonquin people are still talking about Dorothy Parker, ready, one imagines, to move on to Scott Fitzgerald, Thurber and Ross at the drop of a hat. It is astonishing to what extent the great writers of the 1920s have imposed patterns of behaviour on parts of American life. Cocktail hour in New York has an almost ritual significance, the equivalent of the tea ceremony in Japan. In New York the influence of the '20s is pervasive and has lasted astonishingly over the years.

The New Yorker, for instance, may have changed, but its style remains the same to a surprising degree, and its cartoons continue down the decades much as the tomb frescoes of the Pharaohs went on from dynasty to dynasty. This continuity which can be felt in the City is more than superficial. Despite their vociferous pessimism—and there is quite a lot to be pessimistic about—New Yorkers go on believing in the "green light" which Jay Gatsby watched across Long Island Sound. For Gatsby, despite hailing from the Mid-West as Fitzgerald was careful to point out, is unimaginable elsewhere than in his Long Island/New York background, and *The Great Gatsby*, as well as being one of the greatest American novels, is the most relevant to the City. For there is still a feeling that all things are possible, that people can "make it", that there is a golden path which leads to the penthouses and palaces of Sutton Place and Park Avenue and that power and money are somewhere for the taking by brains and energy. New York is defiantly vital, diabolically energetic. Then you hear someone discussing ex-Mayor Koch and the latest "wilding" in Central Park, and wonder if it is not all a masquerade of decay.

But no. Even death and despair in New York have an energetic baroque expansion that is all their own. For all their vigour, though, New Yorkers seem unable to circum-

[1] *Senatorial Privilege: The Chappaquiddick Cover-Up.* By LEO DAMORE. Dell Books, $5.95.

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vent a system of city government that seems custom-made to prevent anyone governing. In the past the difficulty of getting anything done in New York has led to a Genghis Khan approach to town planning. To build urban throughways or bridges a tough technocrat like Commissioner Robert Moses violated many ecological taboos, tearing down housing, dividing neighbourhoods and creating concrete wildernesses. The moral seems to be that when you wish to achieve anything in New York, you must go about it with a manic single-mindedness and disregard of other people's views and interests. Every time I drive up the East Side Drive towards the Triborough Bridge I wonder how road builders were allowed to get away with plans that cut off the inhabitants of Manhattan from the twin assets of the East River and the Hudson. But if those plans had been submitted to the "community", would access to up-state New York, New Jersey and Connecticut be as relatively easy as it is today?

Indeed, the difficult business of reconciling interest groups becomes doubly hazardous when those groups are constituted on ethnic lines. I remember Adam Clayton Powell, the black (and partly Indian) boss of Harlem walking in silence up and down a platform and suddenly turning what can only be describe as "baleful" eyes on the audience to announce, "They're gonna to take all the shit in the city and dump it in Harlem". This was his way of objecting to the building of a sewage works on the Hudson. Present any project as the result of racial prejudice and you have gone a long way towards killing it. It is not surprising that, over the last years, Mayor Koch does not seem to have actually done very much about the City's problems. He is said to have improved New York's finances, but at the moment his most obvious contribution is the new fountain being constructed outside the Plaza Hotel.

THE WORD "crack" seems to surface as often as Viet Nam in the 1960s. For this jazzed-up version of cocaine is introducing an entirely new type of scourge into American inner cities which, one would have thought, had nowhere to go but up. In conjunction with AIDS it is changing the nature of the crisis. "This is the social problem to end all social problems", said a friend who knows more than most people about the state of America. "It is wiping out the problem class."

The argument which he was putting goes as follows. There seems to be no way of preventing drugs from entering the United States. America's geographical and, increasingly, social symbiosis with Latin America means that deleterious habits usual in countries south of the Rio Grande—the farming of, and addiction to coca, for instance, in Colombia, Bolivia and Peru—can be channelled into the United States by all sorts of secret networks and connections. It is the poor who use these intoxicants, beefed up to higher concentrations, which the even poorer South American peasants have a strong economic motive to sell them. In their artificial bliss or drug-assisted orgies, the sub-class have neither the self-control nor the degree of consciousness needed to take the precautions required not to catch or pass on AIDS. So they become HIV positive and finally succumb to disease, knowledge of which leads them to seek still more forgetfulness in still more virulent forms of drug.

Thus a strange kind of Darwinian circle ensures that disease selects its victims according to their inability to exert rational self-control over their impulses. In this process drugs act as an accelerator. In the late 20th century "the survival of the fittest" means, not the survival of the strongest or most muscular, but of those who can adapt themselves to a dangerous environment by the exercise of self-control. Those who are incapable of this have destruction homing in on them.

ANECDOTAL evidence to support this view is not lacking. In the South Bronx where addicts once rushed out of gutted buildings to loot the trucks on the way to the supermarkets, they are now too weak to crawl. Those whom AIDS does not kill, crack does. And so an area empties and, finally, the bulldozers move in to demolish the slum tenements and lay the foundations of new middle-class apartment blocks. Perhaps only small areas of New York City are reduced to such extremities. None the less, the evidence is there every day in the papers. *The Washington Post* (19 July 1989) reports that the inhabitants of the District of Columbia may spend as much on cocaine as they do on food and drink in a year ($8 billion). *The New York Times* (17 July 1989) surmises that, in the city alone, between 50,000 to 100,000 children will lose one parent from AIDS in the present generation. In Washington the teen-age "dealers" stage their shoot-outs. But they do not take crack themselves. Their intoxicant is Hein cognac.

All this may be on the way to Europe. We have not yet imagined the consequences of disease and drugs that act in symbiosis and are socially selective.

In appearance New York seems little changed after more than a decade. Of course, there are more tall buildings, some of them, like the new group down by the Battery, very beautiful, but this has been under way for a long time. On the upper East Side little seems to have altered, though the privileged apartment blocks of the '90s have pushed the Puerto Ricans of East Harlem back beyond a frontier that was always risky and contested.

The main change in the streets is many more Asian faces, in their turn expectant that the promises of the Statue of Liberty will be fulfilled. Well, so they will be, if you work hard and climb the ladders that lead the immigrant from sweated labour in a slum basement to entrepreneur in a black glass office. But the beggars, the drunks and the addicts who lie zonked out on the subway gratings are native Americans. They lack the abilities and the enterprise of the immigrants. They want something done for them. New York is not a good city for that, and a vein of anger and ill-humour runs through its opulence. The film *Ghostbusters II* has as its theme the emergence of New Yorkers' legendary bad temper as a psychic force about to engulf the city. The day is saved by the Statue of Liberty lurching its way to the Metropolitan Museum which figures, unfairly one might think, as the centre of evil. It is a very local film. . . .

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LETTERS

The Oracles

MAY I THANK YOU, and congratulate D. C. Stove, for his exposition (ENCOUNTER, April 1989) of Julian Jaynes's ideas on the growth of consciousness and, in particular, religion. Those of us who, uneasily Janus-faced, think of ourselves as religious (in my case, Christian), but also like to give our minds scope for unbridled, taking-nothing-for-granted speculation, are continually seeking enlightenment (or Enlightenment) in some neutral, intellectual tea-shop where we can have our spiritual cake and eat it. For myself I have to say that Stove's piece gave me a sense of unparalleled mental excitement, approaching indeed recognition: one says "Yes, that's *it*. Of course—why didn't someone realise this before?" It only remains, having read the disciple, to go direct to the sage. There is, as one reads, a quality which one supposes to be not unlike a drug-induced "high", so that one craves more.

I want to go on to suggest an extension, prompted by reflection on the role of hearing to convey authority before the invention of writing. Could it be that the slow dissemination of writing (and its essential counterpart, reading) through the population was the subtle influence which gradually undermined the role of the (real or hallucinatory) auditory stimulus, and thereby led to the decline of the power of the oracles and the inner voices? The development of the new skills must, over time, have created pathways in the brain which could have had the effect of "short-circuiting" the auditory loops and eventually silencing the voices altogether. Thus the growth of mass literacy, slow, spasmodic, and localised as it was, could have just the effect sought by the theory: people begin to have an inner life, stimulated by matter of their own choosing, and are increasingly immune to the effect of oracles' commands by voice.

This could be why, as Stove observes, the speed and the extent of the change from bicamerality was so diverse. If the Aztecs in Mexico in 1519 were indeed still bicameral, this would be because, as I guess, their society was still glued together by hearing. Any contact with a literate society, such as Spain, would start to weaken the adhesive bonds, and the more "civilised" (i.e. literate) they became as a result of the contact, the greater the effect. Did the Spaniards give the Aztecs consciousness as well as smallpox and rum?

I observe also that the power of the written word has been recognised by all the great religions, which have always attached particular importance to the "holy books"; realising, no doubt, that if the faithful are to have inner lives, and with hallucinated hearing not an option, then the party line had better be set out unambiguously for all believers to follow.

DO WE NOT nowadays attach great significance to the power of the written word (and its modern parallel, telecommunications) in weakening the hold of autocratic leaders over the hearts and minds of the people?

That there is a direct line of descent from Plato's *Republic* to *EastEnders* is amazing enough; that the same evolution silenced the voices, and thereby gave rise to consciousness, religion, theology, and war is doubly astonishing. Fortunately, most of us prefer the freedom to speculate, and hence the possibility of disappointment and deceit, to the long-lost hypnotism of the inner voices. Where would ENCOUNTER be otherwise?

A. F. BAINBRIDGE

Farnborough
Hants

A. F. BAINBRIDGE's kind letter gives me an opportunity to correct a mistake in my article. I said, what is generally believed, that *silent* reading "was entirely unknown throughout classical antiquity". If this were right, Bainbridge's idea must be wrong: reading and hearing could never have been competitors in that case.

But an article by B. W. Knox in *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies* (1968), proves conclusively that silent reading was in fact far from unknown in antiquity. So A. F. Bainbridge could be right. But he or she should read Jaynes himself on the invention of writing: I have neither the competence nor the space to expound it.

DAVID STOVE

Mulgoa
Australia

Kafka & Hitler

I HAVE JUST seen in an Off-Broadway production the Piscator play version of Franz Kafka's story of "The Transformation (*Die Verwandlung*)", and I am in two minds whether I should report it to you for M. J. Lasky's "Negative Cultural Tax" ("Berlin Notebook", ENCOUNTER, April 1989).

On the one hand, the relevant time-distortion does come under the vandalism clause. Gregor Samsa, created by Kafka in the 1920s, suddenly appears (a dream? a nightmare?) with right arm upraised in a Nazi salute to greet the *Führer*. It should cost at least ten times the fine per year of chronological violation.

On the other hand, every blow against the old Hitler horror is welcome to me, even if it is smuggled into a text. Can you make any exceptions for worthy causes? Do you give any discounts?

ALFRED MÜHLMANN

New York City

Beckett & Proust

ANDREW SHELLEY'S "No Way In, Go In", (ENCOUNTER, June 1989) hinges upon the illusion that there is at present "No Way In" to Beckett's work; that criticism betrays Beckett; and that comparative discussion of Beckett is futile because his texts somehow attain "an 'incoercible absence of relation'" to those other texts to which they refer. As Shelley rightly observes, Beckett's writings are often strewn with "fragments from previous literature. . . which create expectations which they then do not fulfil". But, as my book *Beckett and Proust* tries to demonstrate, Beckett's writing is also strewn with extremely fulfilling and illuminating references to Proust.

Unable, or unwilling, to detect anything fulfilling in my book, Shelley claims that it places Beckett and Proust within "a relation of simple opposition", and that it presents Beckett as "simply negative, deaf to all positive value—merely the anti-Proust". Yet, as I insist from the very beginning of my book, the relationship between Beckett and Proust is beautifully ambiguous. Beckett not only contradicts certain Proustian values, but also cultivates and condenses other Proustian insights. As Dickens might put it, Beckett is both the best of Proust's critics and the worst of Proust's critics. What higher praise could one offer the post-Proustian writer than my initial affirmation:

> "Over and over again, Beckett's writings compulsively investigate, appropriate, elaborate, distillate, denigrate, negate and generally illuminate . . . Proust's most provocative images, themes and motifs."

Far from envisioning Samuel Beckett as "merely the anti-Proust", I suggest that at different stages of his career Beckett simultaneously appears to be an amalgam of both an "anti-Proust" and a kind of "Super-Proust". In the first section of my book (utterly ignored by Shelley), I discuss the ways in which Proust evokes two inhabitual alternatives to habitual shallowness and stupidity: graceful actions evincing

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"poetry" and "innocence", and graceless "nihilistic inertia". The second section concludes that Beckett's early criticism is "supremely sensitive" to the lower depths of Proust's cosmos, and supremely deaf to Proust's sermons from higher realms. In this respect the virtues and the vices of Beckett's essay on Proust are "equally spectacular".

Again, focusing upon the ambiguities of Beckett's vision, my final section traces the ways in which his English novels give fictional form to his earlier comments upon the Proustian depths; the way in which his French Trilogy refines a particularly "clawing" excremental vision, as narrators contentedly plunge "headlong into the shit"; and finally, the unexpected way in which his recent ghost poems, ghost plays and ghost prose evince almost exactly the same sort of graceful compassionate gestures described by Proust. These writings suggest that "Beckett, like Proust, is every inch a master of the mysterious art of tracing . . . the interpenetration of souls".

FAR FROM acknowledging that I distinguish these transitions in Beckett's work, and far from acknowledging that his reference to the recent Beckettian protagonist's characteristic "twin movement full of grace" is precisely the phrase that I repeatedly cite as Beckett's most memorable image of the surprisingly comforting "human affection" in his latest work, Shelley suggests that I somehow "crucify" Beckett "between" Proust and Burroughs. On the contrary, I celebrate Beckett's evocations of ghostly affection, and quote his suggestion to me (conversation of 17 January 1987), that *Nacht und Träume* highlights "the compassionate hand".

SHELLEY's bizarre conclusion is capped by the glib assertion that "Burroughs is an author who has gone off Murphy's rocker". If I discuss Beckett in the context of Burroughs, it is because their explorations of fragmented perception complement one another. While Beckett explores "solipsistic" confusion, Burroughs investigates "cosmic destruction".

Misunderstanding this point, Shelley once again dismisses Burroughs, this time as an author who "leads us 'headlong into the shit'". Shelley should read Burroughs more carefully. The conclusion to Burroughs's latest novel, *The Western Lands*, movingly looks beyond the excremental, towards the transcendental, somewhat like Beckett's recent writings. Burroughs concludes:

> "I want to reach the Western Lands—right in front of you, across the bubbling brook. It's a frozen sewer. It's known as the Duad remember? . . . You have to be in Hell to see Heaven."

COMPOUNDING his misleading account of my references to Burroughs, Shelley claims that "Proust is Zurbrugg's author of the positive, Burroughs is his guru of the authentically negative". This comment completely misses the point of my argument. Rather than deeming Proust completely positive, I discuss the ways in which he considers positive, habitual and negative existence, and is thus partially positive, whereas Beckett's work tends to reduce things to the sad dialectic between habitual and negative experience. My guru of the authentic is the American poet Robert Lax, who eloquently praises Beckett's "true reports" from the realm of "deep sleep". As I suggest, Beckett perfects such reports in *Worstward Ho*, when describing the harmonious affection between figures "joined by held holding hands".

Neglecting this hypothesis, Shelley rails against my study of "jettisoned, unpublished, uncollected" writings by Beckett, as though these were some sort of satanic verses, fating my findings to become "marginal and rejected". On the contrary, Beckett's remarkable work requires integral examination, marginalia and all, marvels and all. I wish Andrew Shelley had offered a more accurate account of my analysis of these writings, and had "gone on" to read and remember my conclusions.

NICHOLAS ZURBRUGG
Griffith University
Brisbane

I OBVIOUSLY differ from Dr Zurbrugg as much in his opinion of his own work as of Beckett's.

It is not that I find nothing in his book which is "fulfilling" but that there is too much in it which is *self*-fulfilling, in that it assumes too much that it tries to prove. It is interesting in this regard that Dr Zurbrugg does not appear to know what the phrase "to beg the question" means, often using it in the sense "demands that we consider the question".

I find the comparison with Proust not a way into Beckett's work but a way out of it. Beckett's work cannot be handled with the rubber gloves of the comparative method. They are too slippery.

As for Burroughs, I'm aware that he's recently gone mystical, but whether he leads us "headlong into the shit" or "beyond the frozen sewer" into a realm of piss-in-the-wind transcendentalism, makes little difference. Both alternatives are cul-de-sacs. The prospect of the bright stars is what keeps us in the gutter.

Dr Zurbrugg's tendency to self-advertisement, typified by his letter, itself demonstrates that he is too lacking in self-criticism to be a good critic of Beckett—which involves very close attention to the process by which "the observer infects the observed".

ANDREW SHELLEY
Oxford

Nabokov's Skoblin

I WOULD like to thank Mr Zeev Ben Shlomo for having drawn my attention to the fact that Vladimir Nabokov wrote during World War II a short story *à clef*, dealing with the Skoblin affair (see my article "The Strange Lives of Nikolai Skoblin", ENCOUNTER, March 1989). In this story Dr Eitingon makes a fleeting appearance as "Dr Bachrach".

WALTER LAQUEUR
London

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
The Grange Press
Butts Road, Southwick, Sussex

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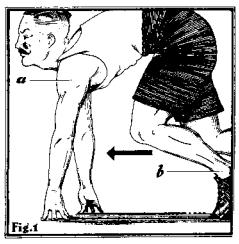

SPORTS & SCHOLARSHIP: *In going over the college transcripts of two college athletes, a defense attorney has presented an eye-opening look at the curriculum some athletes pursue and the university's role in counseling them towards their degrees. Ronnie Harmon, a star now with Buffalo Bills, and a team-mate, Devon Mitchell, were among the student-athletes.*

Under cross-examination the University of Iowa's athletic director, was hard-pressed to describe how Harmon and Mitchell had advanced towards their degrees.

Taking such courses as Billiards, Coaching Football, Bowling and Soccer his first year, Harmon achieved a 1.62 grade-point average on a 4-point scale. Only by going to summer school and earning a B in a course called "Fundamental Military Organization" was he able to remain academically eligible for his sophomore season.

At the end of his junior year at Iowa Harmon had a 1.69 grade-point average and was placed on academic probation. He had yet to take one course in his declared major of Computer Sciences. Harmon then took a course in Watercolor Painting over the summer to raise his grade-point average.

Mitchell's academic record was similar to Harmon's. One year he took a course in Jogging but dropped it. He did once receive an "A"—for his participation on the varsity football team.

NEW YORK TIMES

London

HEAVENLY POLITICS: **At the launch of his novel "House of Cards", Michael Dobbs—chief-of-staff at Conservative headquarters during the 1987 election—threw new light on another of Collins's glossy imprints: the Bible.**

Dobbs recounts how a Journalist, a Priest, and a Politician were asked to use the Bible to prove whose was the oldest profession. The Journalist cited: "In the beginning was the word."

The Priest insisted: "The word was God."

But the Politician had the final say: "God created order out of chaos. And who do you think invented chaos?"

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Oxfordshire

DOORS OF PERCEPTION: *I am reminded by recent correspondence [writes Peter Floyd] that in the County Hall in Exeter the lavatory doors were (and probably still are) marked simply "Men" and "Women". On enquiring the reason, I was told that "men" and "women" were statements of fact while "Ladies" and "Gentlemen" were presumption.*

THE TIMES

London

RECORDING LONG WORDS: **According to the new "Guinness Book Of Records"—which records that it is itself the second greatest best-seller in the world (after the Bible)—the longest word in the German language is "Rechtsschutzversicherungsgesellschaften" (insurance-societies-for-legal-protection). It is not half as long as the Viennese " Donaudampfschiffahrtselectrizitätenhauptbetriebswerk - bauunterbeamtengesellschaft" (Employees-Society-of-the-main-construction-factory-of-the-Danube-Steam-Ship-Company). Small wonder that the biggest dictionary of the world is the "Deutsche Wörterbuch", started by the Brothers Grimm in 1854, completed in 1971, and the cost of the 33 volumes (34,519 pages) is DM 5,425.**

DIE WELT

London

BRAIN FOOD? *The following anecdote is doing the rounds of informed American circles [writes Jurek Martin]. Mrs Thatcher takes her Cabinet out to dinner. The waiter asks the Prime Minister what she will have. "Steak", she says. "And for the vegetables?" he goes on. "They'll have steak, too."*

FINANCIAL TIMES

New York City

RED BREAD: **In New York, Bloomingdales and Rado's, the top department stores, are fighting a bitter bread war. Writs are flying as each claims to be the sole exclusive importer of the fashionable Gorby-watcher's current hottest accessory, real Russian black bread flown in each morning by Aeroflot. Bloomingdales insists that its contract with the Soviet Baking Foundation can admit no competitor; Rado's, meanwhile, waves a copy of its exclusive deal with an arm of Moscow City Council. In the USSR, loaves cost about 20 cents apiece. Across the capitalist ocean, they are going for $6.**

THE GUARDIAN

Munich

BARDOLOGY: *If one consults the new German and French encyclopaedic works about Shakespeare, and adds to it Jan Kott's book about "Shakespeare Today", the Continental-European reader will have hardly any trouble at all solving every Shakespearean puzzle and getting the key to any current Shakespeare production being performed on our stages.*

The German critic, Rolf Vollman, tends, in his 524-page work ("Shakespeare's Arche: ein Alphabet"), to be just a little too funny, a shade too obscene. He is full of puns and offers gratuitous advice like "Hamlet should have laid Ophelia and then sent her to a nunnery". Some connections are left loose. If Fortinbras "didn't want to go to Poland", why don't we find something about it under **"POLAND"** *(only a reference to the Duke in "Measure for Measure")? And why isn't his Index complete? Even* **"ENGLAND"** *is missing, which is after all so important for understanding Shakespeare's work.*

Whereas the German work takes up all the animals in Shakespeare's ark—from dogs to larks, cats and horses, even a yellow nightingale—the French work ("Shakespeare de A a Z", Paris 1988) neglects these altogether but has philological entries about ***Dramaturgy, Translations, Mythology,*** *and the like, even an entry under* ***Paul Claudel.*** *If you want something spicier, then turn to the German scholar who includes "dog's tongue, bat's hair, shark's gums, wolf's tooth, Jew's liver, goat's gall, Tartar lips, tiger's guts", and last but not least "baboon's blood".*

SÜDDEUTSCHE ZEITUNG

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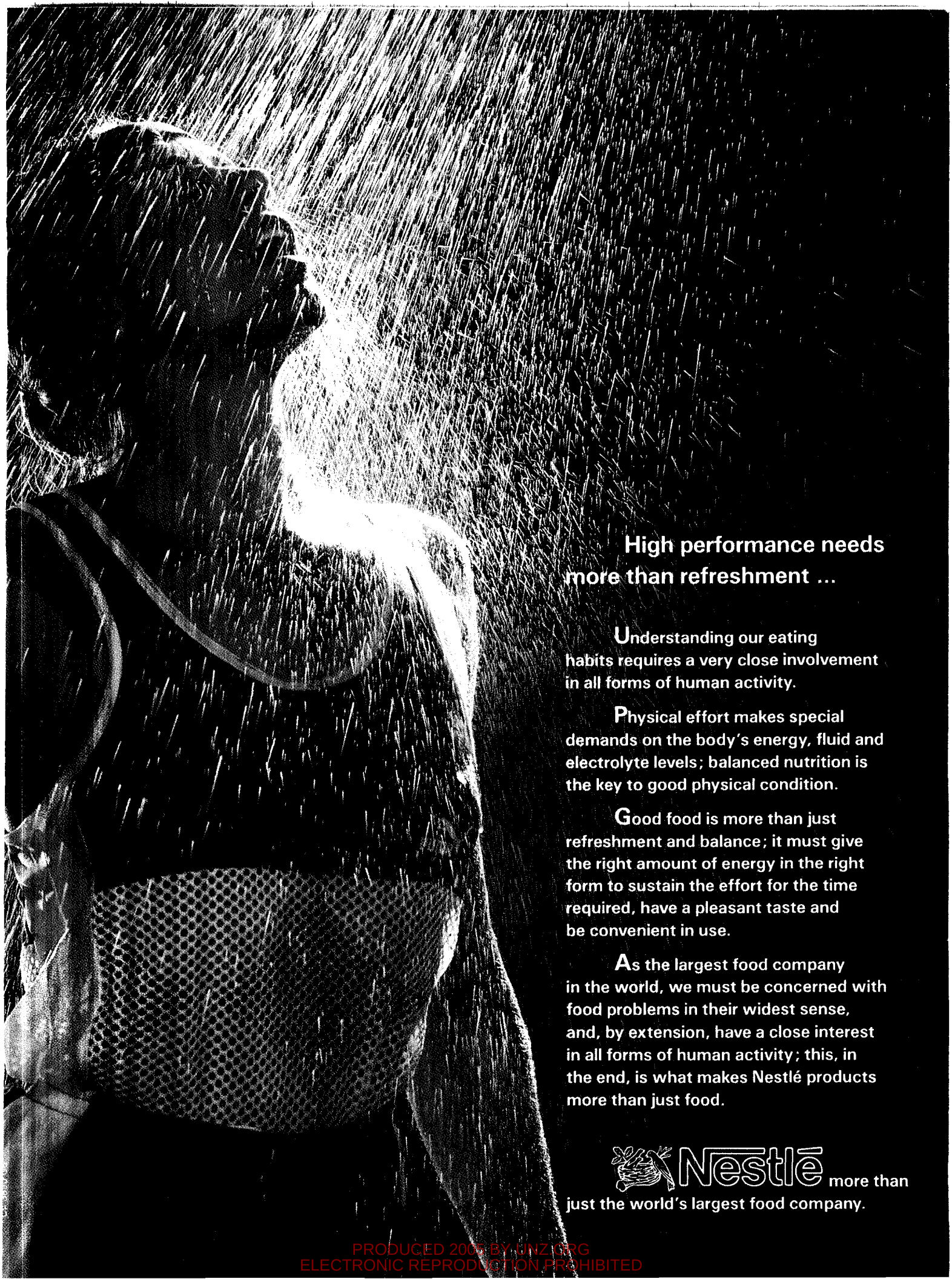

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CRITICAL ADDITIONS

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Literature and Social Practice

Edited by PHILIPPE DESAN, PRISCILLA PARKHURST FERGUSON, and WENDY GRISWOLD

From diverse and sometimes contradictory viewpoints, contributors to this volume argue that literature and society necessarily explain each other. Most of the essays appeared in the Spring 1988 issue of *Critical Inquiry*; included are writings by Robert Weiman, Sandy Petrey, Terry Eagleton, Jean-Marie Apostolidès, J. Paul Hunter, Janice Radway, Pierre Bourdieu, Alain Viala, John Sutherland, Claude DuBois, Regine Robin, G. Thomas Tanselle, and Leo Lowenthal.

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London Review of Books
Illus.

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